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OME stories are meant to be read quietly and some stories are meant to be told aloud. Some stories are only proper for rainy mornings, and some for long, hot afternoons

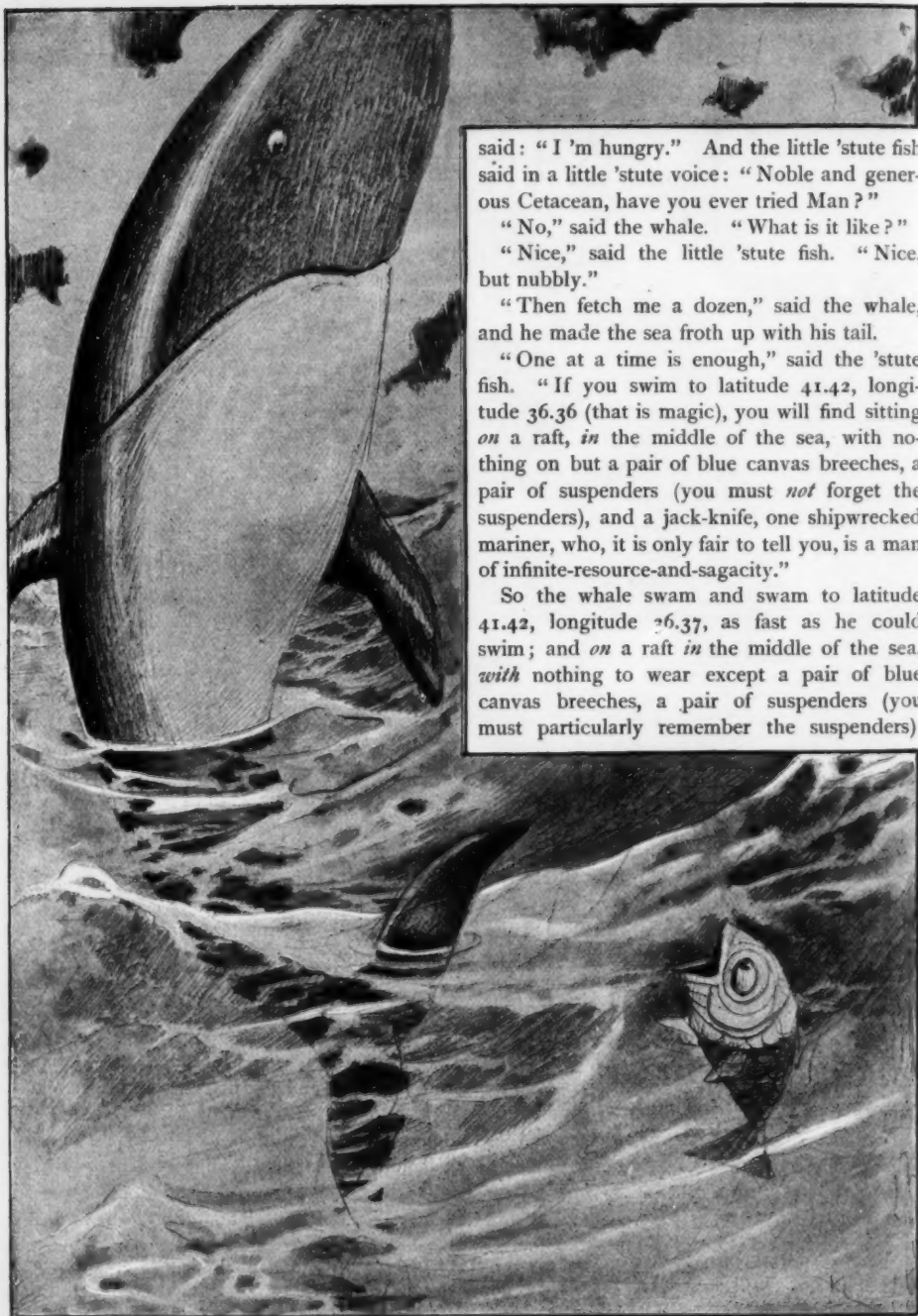
when one is lying in the open, and some stories are bedtime stories. All the Blue Skalalatoot stories are morning tales (I do not know why, but that is what Effie says). All the stories about Orvin Sylvester Woodsey, the left-over New England fairy who did not think it well-seen to fly, and who used patent labour-saving devices instead of charms, are afternoon stories because they were generally told in the shade of the-woods. You could alter and change these tales as much as you pleased; but in the evening there were stories meant to put Effie to sleep, and you were not allowed to alter those by one single little word. They had to be told just so; or Effie would wake up and put back

the missing sentence. So at last they came to be like charms, all three of them,—the whale tale, the camel tale, and the rhinoceros tale. Of course little people are not alike, but I think if you catch some Effie rather tired and rather sleepy at the end of the day, and if you begin in a low voice and tell the tales precisely as I have written them down, you will find that that Effie will presently curl up and go to sleep.

Now, this is the first tale, and it tells how the whale got his tiny throat:—

Once upon a time there was a whale, and he lived in the sea and he ate fishes. He ate the starfish and the garfish, and the crab and the dab, and the plaice and the dace, and the skate and his mate, and the mackareel and the pickereel, and the really truly twirly-whirly eel. All the fishes he could find in all the sea he ate with his mouth—So! Till at last there was only one little fish left in all the sea, and he was an astute fish and he swam a little behind the whale's right ear so as to be out of harm's way. Then the whale stood up on his tail and

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said: "I 'm hungry." And the little 'stute fish said in a little 'stute voice: "Noble and generous Cetacean, have you ever tried Man?"

"No," said the whale. "What is it like?"

"Nice," said the little 'stute fish. "Nice, but nubbly."

"Then fetch me a dozen," said the whale, and he made the sea froth up with his tail.

"One at a time is enough," said the 'stute fish. "If you swim to latitude 41.42, longitude 36.36 (that is magic), you will find sitting *on* a raft, *in* the middle of the sea, with nothing on but a pair of blue canvas breeches, a pair of suspenders (you must *not* forget the suspenders), and a jack-knife, one shipwrecked mariner, who, it is only fair to tell you, is a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity."

So the whale swam and swam to latitude 41.42, longitude 36.37, as fast as he could swim; and *on* a raft *in* the middle of the sea, *with* nothing to wear except a pair of blue canvas breeches, a pair of suspenders (you must particularly remember the suspenders)

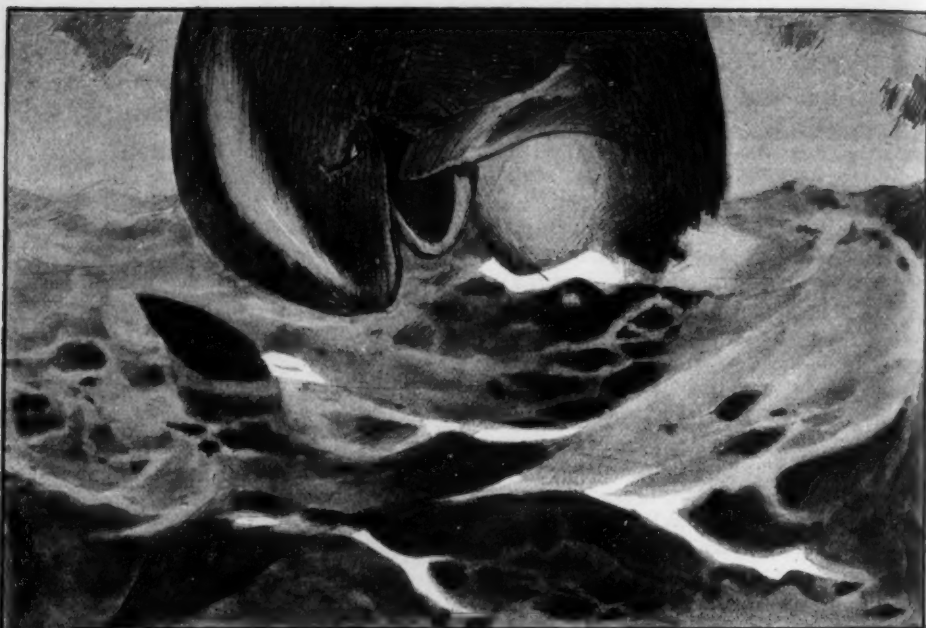
and a jack-knife, he found one single, solitary shipwrecked mariner trailing his toes in the water. (He had his mother's leave to paddle, or else he would never have done it, because he was a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity.)

Then the whale opened his mouth back and back and back till it nearly touched his tail; and he swallowed the shipwrecked mariner, and the raft he was sitting on, and his blue canvas breeches, and the suspenders (which you *must* not forget), and the jack-knife,— he swallowed them all down into his warm, dark inside cupboards, and then he smacked his lips— so, and turned round three times on his tail.

But as soon as the mariner, who was a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity, found himself in the whale's warm, dark inside cupboards, he hopped and he jumped and he thumped and he bumped, and he pranced and he danced, and he banged and he clanged, and he leaped and he crept, and he prowled and he howled, and he cried and he sighed, and he crawled



Chapman



and he bawled, and he danced hornpipes where he should n't, and the whale felt very unhappy indeed. (*Have you forgotten the suspenders?*)

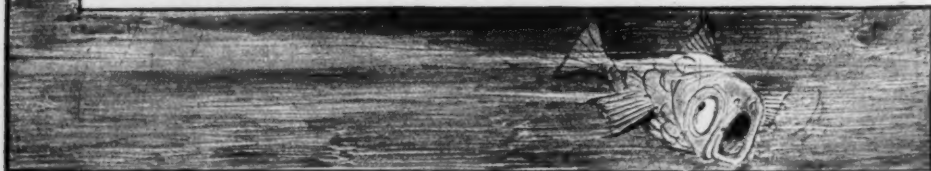
So he said to the 'stute fish: "This man is truly very nubby, and besides he is making me hiccough. What shall I do?"

"Tell him to come out," said the 'stute fish. So the whale called down his own throat to the shipwrecked mariner: "Come out and behave yourself. I've got the hiccoughs."

"Nay—nay," said the mariner. "Not so, but far otherwise. Take me to my natal shore and the white-cliffs-of-Albion, and I'll think about it." And he began to dance again.

"You had better humour him," said the 'stute fish to the whale. "I ought to have warned you that he is a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity."

So the whale swam and swam and swam, with both flippers and his tail, as hard as he could for the hiccoughs; and at last he saw the mariner's natal shore and the white-cliffs-of-Albion, and he rushed half-way up the beach, and opened his mouth wide and wide and wide, and said: "Change here for Winchester, Ashuelot, Nashua, Keene, and stations on the *Fitchburg* road"; and just as he said "Fitch" the mariner walked out of his mouth. But while the whale had been swimming, the mariner, who was indeed a person of infinite-resource-and-sagacity, had taken his jack-knife and cut up the raft into a little square grating all running criss-cross, and he had tied it firm with his sus-



Arthur

penders (*now* you know why you were not to forget the suspenders), and he dragged that grating good and tight into the whale's throat, and there it stuck. Then he recited the following *Sloka*, which, as you have not heard it, I will now proceed to relate:

By means of a grating
I have stopped your ating.

For the mariner he was also an Hi-ber-ni-an. And he stepped out on the shingle, and went home to his mother, who had given him leave to trail his toes in the water; and he married and lived happy ever afterward. So did the whale; but from that day on, the grating in his throat, which he could neither cough up nor swallow down, prevented him eating anything except very, very small fish; and that is the reason why whales nowadays never eat men or boys or little girls.

The 'stute fish went and hid himself in the mud under the door-sills of the Equator. He was afraid the whale might be angry with him.

The sailor took the jack-knife home. He was wearing the blue-canvas breeches when he walked out on the shingle. The suspenders were left behind, you see, to tie the grating with; and that is the end of *that* tale.



Chapman



MIMI was white, and Yuyu was black, and they belonged to each other. Of course these were not their real names: Mimi was christened Euphemia, and Yuyu's name was Julia.

The little girls were the same age, exactly; and on the very day they were born they were presented to each other. Of course the babies knew nothing about it at the time, as they were both asleep; and even if they had been awake, they would not have understood, as they had had no experience in the ways of the great world into which they had just come.

The presentation was a very pretty ceremony, although it was very slight.

It all happened in the old slavery days, on a Louisiana plantation.

When the mistress of the place heard that a little black daughter had come to one of her favorite slaves at the same hour that her own wee babe was laid in her arms, she sent for her husband and whispered something to him, and he smiled delightedly and called the black fellow Tom from the dining-room, and gave an order that sent him grinning out to the quarters. Then, presently, old Granny Milly came trudging into the great house, with a big gray bundle in her arms.

It was Christmas morning, but there were late honeysuckles in bloom and humming-birds at large. Still, it was thought prudent to wrap the new Christmas baby snugly in a soft wool shawl for her first little journey in the world.

Old Granny Milly was so fat that she could hardly walk, but she bore herself proudly as she carried the little slave-baby across the narrow field and through the garden up to the great house.

The "boy" Tom had told everybody he had

met on the way out, and by the time Granny had started there were many spectators at the cabin doors, and a flock of barefoot black children followed her even to the very limit of their range in the campus of the quarters.

It was a fine thing in those days for a slave-born baby to be chosen as maid to a young white mistress, and the old women who stood with their turbaned heads together watching, all agreed that "Sabina's chile" was "sho' born into luck."

When old Milly, short of breath from fat and importance, finally approached the great bed upon which the white mother and pink baby lay, the master of the house bade her place the children side by side, and then he gently opened their tiny right hands, and laying them one within the other, closed them for a moment. Then he lifted the white hand and placed it on the black baby's head. This last was of a double significance, and meant obedience on one side and protection on the other.

The joining hands meant simply that the children were pledged to lifelong friendship, and that they should stand by each other as long as they both should live.

The servants who had tiptoed into the room to see the presentation all declared that while they held hands both babes had smiled in their sleep, and it was considered a good omen.

The ceremony closed with a short thanksgiving and prayer, and the servants standing about the bed and out in the hall all bent their heads while the master asked that Heaven would bless the children to each other.

This was all. And then old Milly proudly took her tiny charge, wrapped again until it

looked like a gray cocoon, back to its mother in the cabin.

The babies did not meet again until the Sunday, a few weeks later, when they were both baptized in the great square parlor. They were to have six years to sleep and play and grow in before they should assume their relations. On every birthday there was a formal visit, when the little Mimi put into the growing

astride her hip, or sending her toddling on before her, as she grew older; and when Sabina would go in to confer with her mistress, she would send Yuyu to the nursery, saying, "Run along an' see yo' little mistus."

Mimi was a tiny child when her mother died—too young to understand. She only knew that every one seemed to suddenly love her more than usual, and that while they told her that beautiful things had happened to her dear mother, they would turn to each other and say, "Is n't it terrible?" Even the servants who brought her presents—birds, squirrels, and flowers from the wood—had a way of looking at her sorrowfully and begging her not to grieve. But after these strange words there was always the gift to divert her—and she was only five.

After that her father was away nearly all the time, traveling for his health, and her grandmother came to live on the plantation.

Her grandmother was tall and very deaf, and to the little child, who scarcely reached her waist, she seemed very remote.

"It seems to me that if I was to get on a step-ladder to talk to grandma, I could n't speak to her easy, because the higher I 'd climb, the taller she 'd get."

This is what she said to Yuyu one day, a short time after her grandmother came; but after a while she felt differently. There were tears in the stately woman's eyes sometimes when she kissed her little grandchild good-night; and when Mimi asked permission to do anything, she would always say, "Certainly." And then she would turn to one of the servants and say, "See that nothing hurts her."

Some weeks after her grandmother had come, Mimi and Yuyu were talking one day, again; and Mimi said: "Oh, yes, she 's jest as tall as ever, but she always says, 'Certain'y.' I 'd a heap rather have a high-up deaf grandma that says, 'Certain'y,' than a soft-lappy one that shook her head 'No' every time—would n't you?"

And Yuyu agreed that she would.

Mimi had never heard the word "deaf" until her grandmother came, and the colored people all pronounced it "deef." This was her



"OLD MILLY PROUDLY TOOK HER TINY CHARGE BACK TO ITS MOTHER IN THE CABIN."

Julia's hands a great bundle, so big and heavy that a strong hand had to support it during its passage.

This contained clothing enough for the coming year—a few new things, and such of milady's dainty cast-offs as the black baby could use.

The children often met in the intervals, naturally, as when Yuyu's mother, Sabina, would come to the house on an errand, bearing Yuyu

first impression, and all her life it seemed to her that "deef" persons were a great deal "deeper" than "deaf" ones. She always suspected that "deaf" folk could hear just a little. But her grandmother was really "deef." She was sure of that, for she afterward remembered how, in those first sad days, the minister used to come and read and pray in her ear-trumpet; and she would never forget the time that Tom had asked her, the first morning at breakfast, how she liked her coffee, and she had raised her trumpet, and Tom, misunderstanding, had poured the coffee into it. She also remembered how, when Tom saw his mistake, her grandmother had quietly told Tom that it did n't matter; and she made up her mind from that moment that her grandmother was a very superior person. This story has been told of some one else, but it really happened to Mimi's grandmother.

Although Yuyu lived with her own "mammy" in the cabin in the quarters, she spent nearly all her days with Mimi now, playing in the barn or the honeysuckle-arbor, or down at the spring in the cow-lot.

It was while the two were sitting together on the top rung of the ladder in the hay-loft, one day, that Yuyu said:

"Five comes after six, don't it, Mimi?"

And Mimi said: "Of course. Who does n't know that?"

And then said Yuyu: "Well, I dunno. We 's five now, an' seem like we ain't been six yit."

"What foolish talk, Yuyu! We 're five now, an' *nex' thing we know*, we 'll be six; an' then —"

But Yuyu interrupted her.

"But I wants to be six *now*. Do it make any diff'ence, you reckon, which comes fust,—five or six,—des so we gits 'em all in?"

"Why, of course, Yuyu. It would be cheatin'. What makes you ask such funny questions?"

"I was des a-studyin' dat ef it did n't make no diff'ence, we could git ole a heap quicker by one, two, three, fo', six, five; an' den I could come over to sleep *right away*. Ef I could be six tell I moves over, I would n't mind bein' five nex' year."

"Neither would I," said Mimi. "We could get even on seven, maybe; but it seems to me, Yuyu, that six an' five would always be cheatin'-spots. I tell you what le' 's do. Le' 's ask Grandma. Le' 's just ask her to let us start belongin' at five. It 'll be a heap honest; an' I 'm 'most sure she 'll say, 'Certain'y.'"

Just what the grandmother said is not recorded, but it probably was "Certainly"; for Yuyu was moved over, bag and baggage, the following week, and was regularly installed as maid to her little mistress, when they were both about a quarter to six.

Of course there was a grown servant to look after both children at first; but Mimi's grandmother had her own ideas of the fitness of things, and she thought it best that Yuyu should have some slight practice in serving from the beginning.

It seems an easy thing to simply stand behind a little lady's chair at table, to pick up her napkin when she dropped it, and not to pay any attention to the conversation; but really it was months before the mirthful Yuyu could do this last; and during the time of the great house-party, when all Mimi's city cousins came to enjoy the sugar-grinding season, there were many times when, at a funny story, Yuyu would snicker so loud and so contagiously that both she and Mimi would have to leave the dining-room in disgrace. But presently the two children would come back together,—little mistress and little maid,—quite restored to order. Yuyu would dutifully help Mimi back into her seat, push her into place, and quietly folding her slim brown hands on the back of her chair, bite both lips until they were quite out of sight, and look at the ceiling.

They were happy children, and there was scarcely an experience in their young lives in which both had not had a share. Indeed, Yuyu declared that she distinctly "ricollected" the day they had first met, although, as we have seen, she was asleep on that memorable occasion.

But Yuyu was not to be embarrassed by a little thing like that. Did n't people often remember what happened in their sleep?

"Cert'n'y I ricollec's, des as well as ef it was 'istiddy, when ole Granny Milly fotched



"TO STAND BEHIND A LITTLE LADY'S CHAIR AT TABLE."

me over to my little mistus, all wropped up in a big shawl. I did n't let on, des-'ca'ze I was too busy talkin' to a' angel." So she loved to tell the story.

Yuyu's grandmother had told her that when babies smiled in their sleep it was because they were talking to the angels, and she easily imagined that the story she had heard was a memory. It even pleased her inventive fancy, sometimes, to describe the angel who was supposed to have talked with her on that great day.

"He was a beauteous white-feathered angel wid a full-moon light behin' his head, an' a gol' harp in his han'," she would say to the plantation children, who loved to listen.

And sometimes they would question her, as when one asked:

"An' what did a little tar-baby like you have to say to an angel?"

The speaker was herself black, and so there was no discourtesy in this hint of her color.

"I did n't say much. I was born wid manners, I was. But I des said, 'Glory! Glory! Glory!'—three times. But we did n't talk wid our moufs—him an' me. We des spoke in sperit language—wid soul-speech."

"An' what make you say 'Glory!?'?" asked her hearers—two at once.

"I reckon you 'd say 'Glory!' too, ef a shiny-headed angel was to drop down out o' heaven to hol' speech wid you. I say 'Glory!' des 'ca'ze my soul was satisfied—dat what."

At this all the children laughed.

"Des lis'n at Yuyu—how she run on!" said one. "What make yo' soul satisfied, Yuyu?"

"My soul was satisfied 'ca'ze I was sent to my little mistus—dat what make my soul satisfied." And then she added: "An' Mimi she said, 'Glory!' too. I heerd her. We was bofe tickled in de sperit to b'long to one n'er,—was n't we, Mimi?"

And truthful Mimi answered: "I am sure I must have been, ef I knew it; but I don't remember."

To which Yuyu replied: "Well, it's good I ricollec', less 'n we 'd bofe forgot."

"What was de color o' yo' angel, Yuyu?" asked a mischievous black fellow; and at this Yuyu raised herself loftily as she answered:

"He was *white*—dat what. He was des as

white as Mimi; and f'om de way dey favors, I 'spec' dey twins—dat is, ef dey *got* any twin angels."

Now, as such experiences in baby-life are not common, it is very easy to think of the little Yuyu as a terrible fib-teller; but this is n't quite fair. The writer of this story of the two maids knows a very intelligent woman, who has knowledge of many books and countries, who cannot, for the life of her, be quite sure whether some of the funny incidents of her childhood happened to her or to her older sister, they have so often been told and laughed over, with long intervals of silence between; and if this be true of an intelligent "grown-up," may we not believe that the little slave-child Yuyu, who had from her babyhood sat, night after night, with her old grandmother in the moonlight, and listened to her wonder-tales of imps and goblins, could easily have mistaken an impression for a memory?

This old grandmother had herself come from Africa, and she was full of uncanny beliefs, as well as some that were poetic and beautiful. Yuyu had owned, ever since she could remember, a curiously shaped fish-bone which she had tied around her neck, and a rabbit's foot in her pocket to keep off witches, or "hinnies," as her grandmother sometimes called them. The old woman was very wrinkled and thin, and her shriveled black face was surmounted by a thick mop of snowy wool that gleamed in the moonlight like a halo, beneath which her deep-set eyes shone like living coals. She could not read from books, but she declared that with her "in'ard eye o' faith" she could read prophecies without a book, just from her open hands; and sometimes, when the plantation was still, her cracked voice would float up to the great house from the wood-pile where she sat "prophesying," and it had a mournful sound.

With such an influence in her life, is it strange that, from the time she could remember, Yuyu had been afraid of the dark? Was it strange that when she would forget to notice the sun and stay too late at the quarters, rather than follow the foot-path through the narrow pine-wood she would dart across the potato-field and enter by way of a chicken-hole cut in the back-yard fence? She always dreaded to get

down on her stomach and draw herself through this little arch. It filled her with terror lest something should attack her either from behind or before, when she was half through; and so she always kicked and shouted aloud during the passage, and Mimi, hearing her cries, would say: "Listen to Yuyu comin' through the chicken-hole!" She would give an answering shout, and often reach her in time to help pull her through. There was a certain great red rooster in the poultry-yard that Yuyu always feared would peck at her eyes; but even more than the red rooster she dreaded the hiss of the great white goose. Her grandmother held the goose to be sacred, as the people of India do the peacock; and Yuyu always suspected that this pink-eyed, waddling fellow knew things he could tell if he would. If he should discover her half through the chicken-hole, he might rush up and begin to hiss and to prophesy right in her face, and she would have to listen. Is n't it strange how people stand in awe of superior wisdom? It is so the world over—even when wisdom is supposed to exist

thing was friendly and fragrant, and where nothing frightful ever came excepting her own foolish fears.

When the children were nine years old—somehow no one seemed to think of it before—it was decided that it was high time they should be learning something serious. This meant a governess for Mimi, and for Yuyu it meant mornings spent in the sewing-room, with a needle in her restless hand and long seam pinned to her knee. This was in the old days of long study-hours and short stitches, and the little girls got very tired sometimes. Still they had their afternoons to play together; and at night, when Miss Fay, the governess, would be sitting in the library, reading into the grandmother's ear-trumpet, Mimi would play governess and make Yuyu recite all the morning's lessons to her. Then Yuyu would be teacher, and Mimi would recite. And after a while these exercises really grew very interesting. For instance, Mimi would close her books and repeat as nearly as she could one of Miss Fay's

talks on any subject—on superstitions, for instance. She would say emphatically that they were *not true*; that only ignorant people believed in them; that there were no such things as "platties," or "ha'nts," or "hinnies"; that white geese could not prophesy; that rabbits' feet could not protect; that faith in a loving God was the only faith worthy of his children. Then she would ask Yuyu to repeat it all, word for word, and for a while Yuyu was afraid to do it.

"I'm 'feard dat ef I deny de ha'nts, dey 'll ha'nt me," she would say.

It was a long time before she could give up all this foolish superstition and stop wearing her rabbit's foot and magic fish-bone; but on the day that Mimi gave her a little Testament with her own

name in it, of her own accord she put these silly things away.

Of course both children had their faults and their small vanities, and some of them are rather funny, as we look back at them.

Mimi's long flaxen hair was very straight, and she longed for curls; Yuyu's was hope-



"EVEN MORE THAN THE RED ROOSTER SHE DREADED THE HISS OF THE GREAT WHITE GOOSE."

in the person of a goose. Ordinarily, one has not much respect for the goose, simply because he is not considered wise.

This way of getting home was attended with difficulties; but it was not so terrible as braving the unknown dangers of the lonely wood—a really sweet, pine-scented wood, where every-

lessly curly, and the desire of her heart was to get it straight! And so, at bedtime, Mimi would sit on a low stool while Yuyu put the long yellow strands in curl-papers, and then the little maids would change places. Yuyu would take the low seat, and Mimi would divide her kinky hair into sections, rub each lock with a bit of tallow candle, and wrap it round and round with strips of calico until not a kink of the entire mop was allowed to have its wilful way. When it was done, Yuyu would declare that it was all she could do to shut her eyes; and, indeed, her eyebrows did look pretty high, and she appeared very wide-awake. After this, both children would kneel and say their prayers, and Mimi, being mistress, would get first into her own little bed, while Yuyu tucked her in. And then Yuyu would say, "Good-night, little mistus." Or, perhaps, she would linger a while, and they would talk a little, as when, one night, Mimi said: "Yuyu, I been a-thinkin' that maybe it's a sin for you and me to put our hair up this way."

"Which way?" asked the alert Yuyu. "Does you mean dat curls is a sin—or straightness?"

"I was just a-thinkin' about the *vainness*, Yuyu. Maybe God intended curls for you and straightness for me."

"Law, honey, Gord don't care—des so we do our juty an' don't tell lies."

"An' keep the Sabbath holy—eh, Yuyu? Well, good-night, then. My head feels awful bumpy, though, whether God cares or not." And Mimi yawned.

"Mine ain't got no feelin's *to* it,—no mo' 'n my foots when dey goes to sleep,—but I likes de way it feels when it ain't got no feelin', 'ca'ze I knows it's a-stretchin'. Good-night. Sleep tight."

And by this time, unless Mimi were too far gone, she would answer: "Don't let the mosquitos bite."

And in about two minutes they would both be sound asleep.

When the war came, in 1861, the little girls were twelve years old. Of course the news made a stir in the place, but not more than other dangers that had threatened it in years

past; certainly no more than the annual overflow of the river, which flooded all the surrounding lowlands, and turned the plantation into an island. It could not be worse than the yellow fever that had come quite to its gates, or the cotton-worm that had traveled in an army across the country, sparing only beautiful Ridgewood—stately Ridgewood, that seemed to rise on its flowery knoll overlooking the river, and to defy all unworthy visitors to approach. If the mighty river or the fever or the army-worm could not come in, surely war would knock in vain for admittance!

It seemed, indeed, for a time that it was really to be so. It is true that Mimi's father had hurried home at the first gun, and had enlisted as a soldier. But he had often come for short visits before—come only, as now, to go again. What matter if he did this time march away at the head of a company, or that they all kept step as they marched to the beating of a drum? The plantation hands had more than once been marshaled out, two by two, armed with pickaxes and lanterns, or heavy sacks of strange-smelling powders, to reinforce the river-banks or to fight the worm. A "shot-gun quarantine" had kept out the fever.

Of course the war would not be let in!

From twelve to thirteen—to fourteen—to fifteen; from play to play-work—to real work; from pinafores to short frocks—to long skirts,—how easily do the children pass from one to the other, with only birthdays to mark the boundaries!

When our two little heroines were fifteen, the war seemed to them not yet really come. It was outside, and fighting to get in; and in the interval since it had begun several other enemies had been whipped out. But they were short-lived, these others,—the river, the worm, the fever; and if only held at bay until their mortal enemy, a freeze, should arrive, they must all succumb. But the war! The war was different. It could go on—and on—and on, reckless of wind or weather. And so, after a while, it seemed that war—that is, war-on-the-outside—was the natural thing. It had gotten to be the way for things to happen; it was the way for troubles to come. Instead of

losing fathers and uncles through sickness,—in bed, with medicine and doctors,—when there was war one lost them through NEWS. There were no funerals, even. Just NEWS. NEWS of

gate, Yuyu would run into Mimi's room and say in a mysterious stage-whisper:

"News, Missy!"

That was all; but it was enough.

Mimi would drop her book or pen, or her music, and hasten to her grandmother; and presently she would come back looking sad and pale. And sometimes the news that had come was to be kept secret, and Mimi would tell it to Yuyu in whispers. And Yuyu never told. She was an honest little maid, and worthy of her trust.

But one day, when news had come,—important news on horseback,—Mimi came out of the library with a new look in her face. She was smiling. Yuyu was waiting at the door for her, and when she saw her face she smiled too.

"Dey was n't no news dis time, was dey, Missy?" she said lightly. It never occurred to her that there might be good news.

"Yes, Yuyu, news—'bad news,' the man called it; but it is such good news, too. It is *peace*, Yuyu!"

Yuyu's eyes sparkled.

"Yes, Yuyu, peace—and freedom!"

At this last word, Yuyu's face changed. Mimi noticed it, and it reminded her of something that startled her. Yuyu would be free! This must be great news to her. Mimi's voice was very low when she spoke again.

"Yes, freedom, Yuyu," she repeated.



"THE FULL MOON, RISING OVER THE PINES, SHONE IN THE DOORWAY, COVERING THE GIRLS WITH ITS SHAFT OF WHITE LIGHT." (SEE PAGE 102.)

Mimi's father's death; NEWS of the great battle that took her Uncle Alfred and her three cousins. NEWS. How the children grew to hate the word!—for so long it had meant only sorrow.

Many a time, seeing a stranger ride into the

"Freedom? How you mean, Missy?" Yuyu's voice was actually trembling.

"I mean that grandma says—that the man said—that all the letters said that all the colored people are free. But we must n't speak of it—not to-night. Grandma is feeling too weak this evening; but in the morning she is going down to the quarters, and the overseer is going to ring the bell to call the hands, and then grandmother is going to tell them herself. Are you glad, Yuyu?"

"Who? Me? I ain't gwine be free from you, Missy, is I?" she faltered.

Mimi could hardly answer, but she had a very high idea of the dignity of self-control: she had seen her grandmother bear everything in silence. And so she said:

"Yes, Yuyu,—from me—certainly. You are as free as I am now."

At this Yuyu sank upon the floor, dropped her head upon her lap, and began to sob.

Mimi was crying, too, by this time; but she kept still. Yuyu was first to speak again.

"An' you mean to say dat we don't n'er one of us b'long no mo'?" she wailed.

Mimi sat down flat on the floor beside her, and put her arm around her waist, but she did not speak for some time.

Then she said tenderly:

"If we are free, Yuyu, we can do as we please. And you are *free*—free, Yuyu! It is a great thing to be free. Grandma says it is."

"Ef a pusson *haf to be free*, whe'r or no, I don't call dat freedom. I calls dat cheatin'. I calls it freedom ef a pusson is free to *be* free ef dey *want* to be free! I like to know who sesso dat you an' me is free, anyhow?"

"It has been decided—by the war; it is the law now."

Yuyu sat in thought quite a long time. And then she said, sniffing still: "Seem to me dat ain't got nothin' to do wid *us*. I done heerd my gran'mammy talk, and she say dat freedom is for all dese heah bought-an'-sold niggers. But it ain't got nothin' to do wid Christmas gif's. I ain't never *been* bought. Marster gimme to you, *de day I come*, for a Christmas gif', an' he ain't here to take me back!"

It was growing dark, and the full moon, rising over the pines, shone in the doorway, covering

the girls with its shaft of white light. They sat there a long time. Yuyu's sobbing grew less and less, until it ceased altogether; but Mimi's arm was still around her when she said:

"I tell you what I think, Yuyu. I think we'd better consider it for a while. You are free to belong, you know, if we want to; and I want to—if you do."

"Well, ef *I* wants to, an' *you* wants to, I don't see no use considerin'. You know you can't git along widout me, Missy,—de way you forgits to pick up yo' frocks—an' yo' hair so straight an' obstropulous—an'—an'—an' heap o' times *I needs you*, too. Many a time I don't b'lieve I'd o' ever lived to git th'ough de chicken-hole 'cep'n' for you a-pullin' me th'ough."

At this both girls got to laughing. It was a good thing for them, for it relieved the situation.

"Well, Yuyu, shall we say to-night—*now*—that we are going to keep on belonging, freedom or no freedom?"

"Of co'se, Missy. Dat 's des what I been a-tellin' you. Now you take a-holt o' my hand."

Mimi laid her white hand in Yuyu's black one.

"Dat 's it," said Yuyu. "Dis means dat we gwine stan' up for one n'er, des like marster said de fust time."

"As long as we live?" Mimi added.

"Yas, o' co'se, as long as we live," Yuyu repeated.

And then she added: "Now lay yo' han' on my head." She lowered her head as she spoke, but Mimi hesitated.

"Are you sure you want that part, Yuyu? You remember what it meant."

"Co'se, I ricollec'. I ain't no half-way gal. It mean dat I 's yo' little nigger, an' you 's my little mistus—dat what it mean. *Lay it on.*"

Laughingly, but with a sob in her throat, Mimi laid her hand upon Yuyu's head.

"And it means, for my part, Yuyu, that I am going to try to be a better little mistress than I've been; and—"

Yuyu laughed. "An' ef I gits ketched in trouble, you gwine pull me out ag'in—eh, Missy?"

"Yes, I 'll always pull you out if I can."

Just look at the moonlight, Yuyu. How bright it is! Why, it 's all over us!"

"I been lookin' at it — an' it 's a good sign. It 's a sign dat —"

"Never you mind about signs. It 's a sign that the moon is full — that 's all. But listen, Yuyu. Was n't that Mammy Mano's voice just now?"

"Yas, I 'spec' it was, 'ca'ze she done give out for all hands to come over to de wood-pile to-night. She say she got a big prophecy to read out 'er hand to-night. Yas, dat 's her a-readin' now."

"Would n't it be funny if she were to prophesy freedom, Yuyu?"

"Yas, to all but us. Come, le' 's go up an' listen."

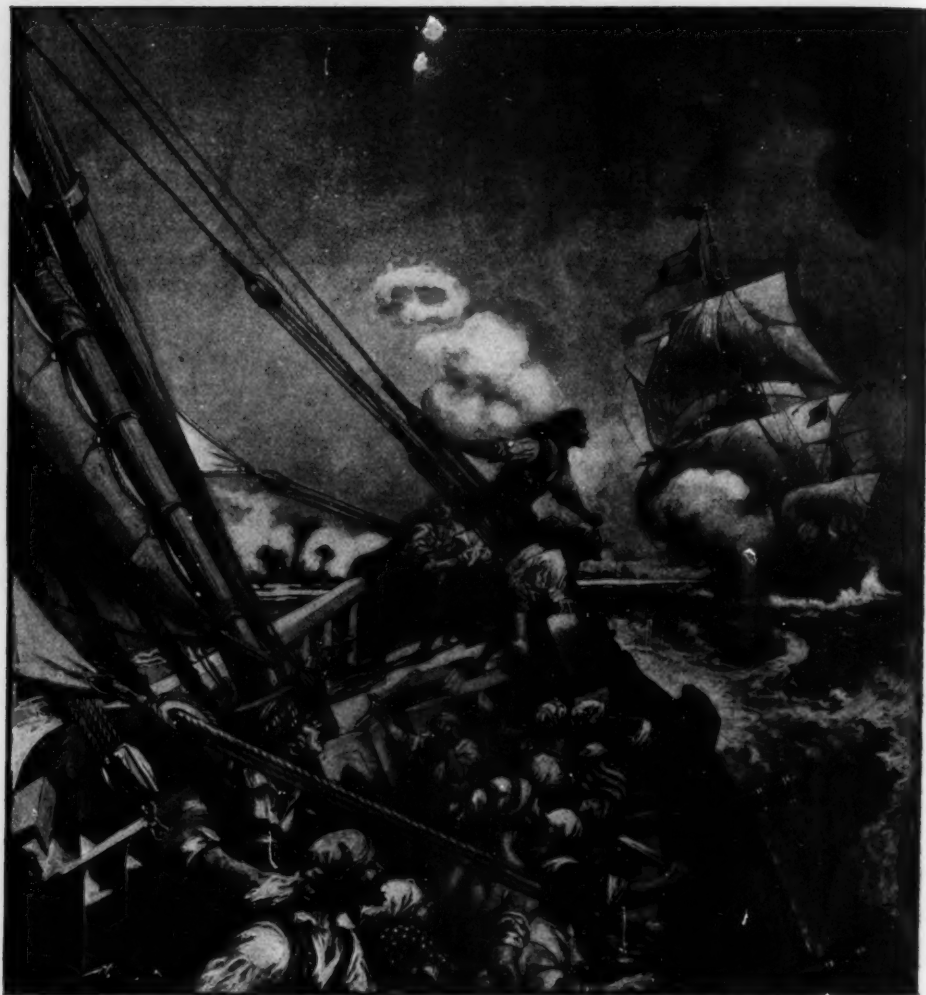
* * * * *

More than thirty years have passed since the two little maids sat together in the moonlight, and agreed that even if all the world were free, they would always belong to each other; and although they are both grandmothers now, they say that they belong to each other yet. And so they do, in all the sweetest ways that "belonging" means. For many years they have lived in a big Southern city,— not in the same house, but near enough to be together on all important occasions of joy or of sorrow. Whenever there is a wedding in the family, "Aunt Yuyu," as she is called, sits bravely in line with her "white folks" in the reserved pew; but she is never so happy and important as at a christening when she carries the babies up the aisle in her arms.



THE BUCCANEERS OF OUR COAST.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.



"THEY SET ALL SAIL, AND THERE WAS A FINE SEA CHASE."

[*Begun in the November number.*]

CHAPTER V.

THE STORY OF A PEARL-PIRATE.

THE ordinary story of the pirate, or the wicked man in general, no matter how success-

ful he may have been in his criminal career, nearly always ends disastrously, and in that way points a moral which doubtless has a good effect on a large class of people who would be very glad to do wrong, provided no harm was likely to come to them in consequence. But

the story of Peter the Great, which we have just told, contains no such moral. In fact, its influence upon the adventures of that period was most unwholesome.

When the wonderful success of Peter the Great became known, the buccaneering community at Tortuga was wildly excited. Every bushy-bearded fellow who could get possession of a small boat and induce a score of other bushy-bearded fellows to follow him, wanted to start out and capture a rich Spanish galleon, as the great ships, used alike for war and commerce, were then called.

But not only were the French and English sailors and traders who had become buccaneers excited and stimulated by the remarkable good fortune of their companion, but many people of adventurous mind, who had never thought of leaving England for purposes of piracy, now became firmly convinced that there was no business which promised better than that of a buccaneer; and some of them crossed the ocean for the express purpose of getting rich by capturing Spanish vessels homeward bound.

As there were not enough suitable vessels in Tortuga for the demands of the recently stimulated industry, the buccaneer settlers went to other parts of the West Indies to obtain suitable craft; and it is related that in about a month after the great victory of Peter the Great, two large Spanish vessels, loaded with silver bullion, and two other heavily laden merchantmen, were brought into Tortuga by the buccaneers.

One of the adventurers who set out about this time on a cruise after gold-laden vessels was a Frenchman who was known to his countrymen as Pierre François, and to the English as Peter Francis. He was a good sailor, and ready for any sort of a sea-fight; but for a long time he cruised about without seeing anything which it was worth while to attempt to capture. At last, when his provisions began to give out and his men to become somewhat discontented, Pierre made up his mind that rather than return to Tortuga empty-handed, he would make a bold and novel stroke for fortune.

At the mouth of one of the large rivers of the mainland the Spaniards had established a pearl-fishery; for there was no kind of wealth or treasure, on the land, underground, or at the

bottom of the sea, that the Spaniards did not get if it were possible.

Every year, at the proper season, a dozen or more vessels came to this pearl-bank, attended by a man-of-war to protect them from molestation. Pierre knew all about this; and as he could not find any Spanish merchantmen to rob, he thought he would go down and see what he could do with the pearl-fishers. This was something the buccaneers had not yet attempted, but no one knows what he can do until he tries, and it was very necessary that this buccaneer captain should try something immediately.

When he reached the coast near the mouth of the river, he took the masts out of his little vessel, and rowed quietly toward the pearl-fishing fleet, as if he had intended to join them on some entirely peaceable errand; and, in fact, there was no reason whatever why the Spaniards should suppose that a boat full of buccaneers should be rowing along that part of the coast.

The pearl-fishing vessels were all at anchor, and the people on board were quietly attending to their business. Out at sea, some distance from the mouth of the river, the man-of-war was lying becalmed. The native divers who went down to the bottom of the sea to bring up the shell-fish which contained the pearls, plunged into the water, and came up wet and shining in the sun, with no fear whatever of any sharks which might be swimming about in search of a dinner; and the people on the vessels opened the oysters and carefully searched for pearls, feeling as safe from harm as if they were picking olives in their native groves.

But something worse than a shark was quietly making its way over those tranquil waters, and no banditti who ever descended from Spanish mountains upon the quiet peasants of a village equaled in ferocity the savage fellows who were crouching in the little boat belonging to Pierre of Tortuga.

This innocent-looking craft, which the pearl-fishers probably thought was loaded with fruit or vegetables that somebody from the mainland desired to sell, was permitted, without being challenged or interfered with, to row up alongside the largest vessel of the fleet, on

which there were some armed men and a few cannon.

As soon as Pierre's boat touched the Spanish vessel, the buccaneers sprang on board with their pistols and cutlasses, and a savage fight began. The Spaniards were surprised; but there were a great many more of them than there were pirates, and they fought hard. However, the man who makes the attack, and who is at the same time desperate and hungry, has a great advantage, and it was not long before the buccaneers were masters of the vessel. Those of the Spaniards who were not killed were forced into the service of their captors, and Pierre found himself in command of a very good vessel.

Now, it so happened that the man-of-war was so far away that she knew nothing of this fight on board one of the fleet which she was there to watch; and if she had known of it, she would not have been able to give any assistance, for there was no wind by which she could sail to the mouth of the river. Therefore, so far as she was concerned, Pierre considered himself safe.

But although he had captured a Spanish ship, he was not so foolish as to haul down her flag and run up his own in its place. He had had very good success so far, but he was not satisfied. It was quite probable that there was a rich store of pearls on board the vessel he had taken; but on the other vessels of the fleet there were many more pearls, and these he wanted if he could get them. In fact, he conceived the grand idea of capturing the whole fleet!

But it would be impossible for Pierre to attempt anything on such a magnificent scale until he had first disposed of the man-of-war; and as he had now a good, strong ship, with a much larger crew than that with which he had set out,—for the Spanish prisoners would be obliged to man the guns and help him in every way to fight their countrymen,—Pierre determined to attack the man-of-war.

A land wind began to blow, which enabled him to make very fair headway out to sea. The Spanish colors were flying from his topmast, and he hoped to be able, without being suspected of any evil designs, to get so near to

the man-of-war that he might run alongside and boldly board her.

But something now happened which Pierre could not have expected. When the commander of the war-vessel perceived that one of the fleet under his charge was leaving her companions and putting out to sea, he could imagine no reason for such extraordinary conduct except that she was taking advantage of the fact that the wind had not yet reached his vessel, and was trying to run away with the pearls she had on board. From these ready suspicions we may imagine that, at that time, the robbers who robbed robbers were not all buccaneers.

Soon after the Spanish captain perceived that one of his fleet was making its way out of the river, the wind reached his vessel, and he immediately set all sail and started in pursuit of the rascals whom he supposed to be his dishonest countrymen.

The breeze freshened rapidly; and when Pierre and his men saw that the man-of-war was coming toward them at a good rate of speed, showing plainly that she had suspicions of them, they gave up all hope of running alongside of her and boarding her, and concluded that the best thing they could do would be to give up their plan of capturing the pearl-fishing fleet, and to get away with the ship they had taken, and whatever it had on board. So they set all sail, and there was a fine sea chase.

The now frightened buccaneers were too anxious to get away. They not only put on all the sail which the vessel could carry, but they put on more. The wind blew harder, and suddenly down came the mainmast with a crash. This stopped the chase, and the next act in the performance would have to be a sea-fight. Pierre and his buccaneers were good at that sort of thing, and when the man-of-war came up there was a terrible time on board those two vessels. But the Spaniards were the stronger, and the buccaneers were defeated.

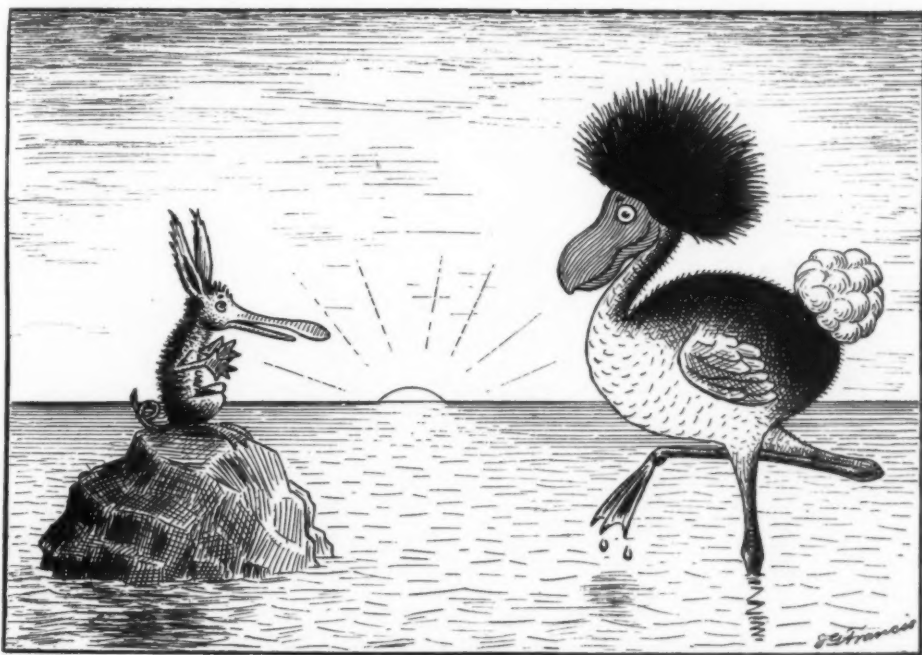
There must have been something in the daring courage of this Frenchman and his little band of followers which gave him favor in the eyes of the Spanish captain; for there was no other reason for the good treatment which the buccaneers received.

They were not put to the sword, nor thrown overboard, nor sent on shore and made to work as slaves—three very common methods of treating prisoners in those days; but they were all set free, and put on land so that they might go where they pleased!

This unfortunate result of the bold enterprise undertaken by Pierre François was deeply deplored, not only at Tortuga, but in England and in France. If this bold buccaneer had captured the pearl-fleet, it would have been a victory that would have made a hero of him

on both sides of the Atlantic; but had he even been able to get away with the one vessel he had seized, he would have been a rich man, and might have retired to a life of ease and affluence. The vessel he had captured proved to be one of the richest-laden of the whole fleet; and not only in the hearts of Pierre and his men, but among his sympathizers in Europe and America, there was great disappointment at the loss of that mainmast, which until it cracked was carrying him forward to fame and fortune.

(To be continued.)



A Needless Apprehension.

A shipwrecked Spoonbill always has a shock
When he sees a Widgeon wading towards his rock.

The Enviably of Errand Master Merrivein



BY VIRGINIA WOODWARD CLOUD.



YOUTH Mistress Merrivein, one morn, "Go! Get ye forth right early,
And fetch a pound o' tea from out the market-place o' Durley;
Of green alpaca buy a yard, red ribbon for my muff,
An earthen crock, a skein of yarn, ha'penny worth o' snuff,
A wooden pail, a pair of mitts, and flour from the mill, sir;
And, that you may return full soon, go round by Hyburn Hill, sir."

So kindly Master Merrivein, he hied him forth right early;
And this is what he told himself upon the road to Durley:
"Of red alpaca buy a pound, a pail of tea, a muff;
Green mitts, a skein of flour, and a half a yard of snuff!"

And as he went down Hyburn Hill, a-whistling blithe and cheery,
He met the market-woman, who came out from County Kerry,
With basket balanced on her head, and panniers at her
side,

She bobbed to Master Merrivein; and this was what
she cried:

"Arrah, now, pretty gintleman! Coom,
sthop awhile an' buy!
I 've spectacles to match the rogue
a-twinklin' in yer eye!
Wid neckerchiefs an' finger-rings — most
beauchiful they 're shinin'!
To suit ye dacintly an' grand, I 'll
ststraightway be divinin'."

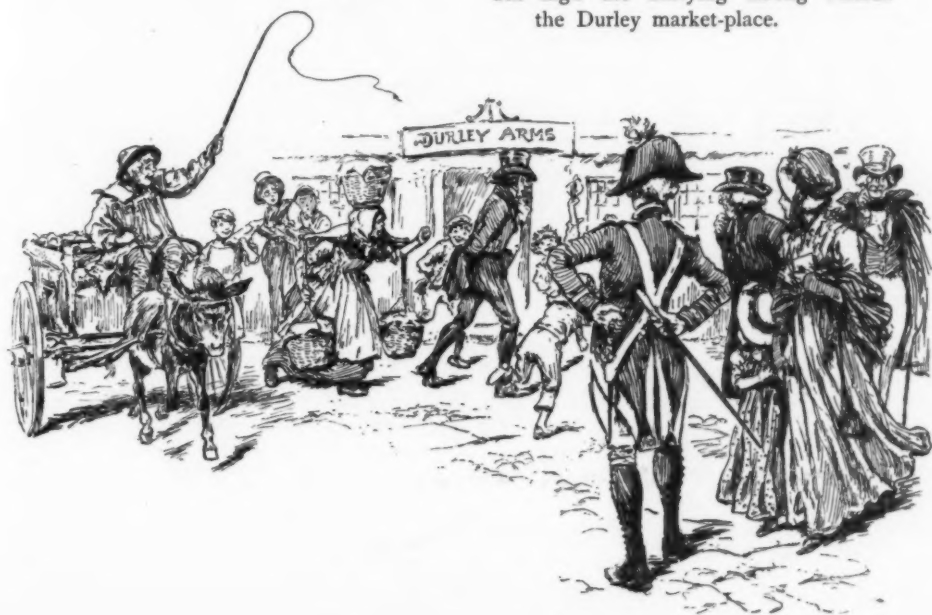
But Master Merrivein, the wise,
he sagely shook his head,
And to the market-woman these
mysterious words he said:
"Of red alpaca buy a pound;
a yard of mitts and muff;
Green flour in a wooden crock,
and half a skein of snuff—"

"Begone!" that market-woman
cried; "the likes of ye
should know
A dacint market-woman 'll not be
tr'ated so!"



Down Hyburn Hill she followed him,
with hard and furious pace,

Till nigh the hurrying throng outside
the Durley market-place.



And there, with her black cat, was Meg, the Witch o' Durley Green.
 "Hold, now, and hearken, sir," cried she; "your fortune I have seen!
 Strange stores indeed of gold and gear this day are waiting you;
 But he who 'd find aright must buy my magic snake-tooth brew!"



But Master Merrivein the wise, he
 sagely shook his head,
 And to the Witch o' Durley Green these
 mystic words he said:
 "Of red alpaca buy a skein—a crock of
 muffs and things;
 Green spectacles, a pail of snuff, a pound
 of finger-rings—"

"Hoots! Toots!" the Witch o' Durley cried,
 'mid shouts and gibes and laughter,

As with her stick upraised in air she angrily sped after.
 While Jake the Pieman, ran before, a-calling "Cake or tart, sir?"
 And Moll, the gypsy, ran beside, a-crying, "Make you smart, sir,



"With laces, ribbons, yellow beads, and little looking-glasses!
An' you 'll be finer than the lads, an' fairer than the lasses!"
But with his hands upon his ears good Merrivein, he sped,
While they followed, in amazement at the queer words that he said.

"Of red alpaca buy a crock, a pail of rings, green muff;
A half a pound of spectacles, a yard of snake-tooth snuff"—
Oh, then he fled beyohd their shouts, that nobody might
find him;
But buxom Bess, the squire's maid, went running on
behind him.



And Polly from the Ferrier's, and Peggy from the hillside,
And little Norah of Dunblea, and Nelly of the millside;
And so they ran, and oh, they ran! a-joining hands together,
Twixt Durley Hill and Durley Green, all in the windy weather.
And there,—good Master Merrivein!—upon a stone they found him;
And oh, they glanced, and oh, they pranced, and oh, they danced
around him!

And Polly showed a crimson shoe,
And Norah's saucy eyes were blue,
And Bess she wore a kerchief red, and Peggy had a yellow head,
And Nelly like a lark did sing, as round they whirled them in a ring.



But through the song and laughter, and
the tripping dance so gay,
They heard good Master Merrivein's dis-
jointed utterance say:

"'T was red alpaca in a pail . . . a pound of looking-glasses . . .
Blue muffs and things . . . red finger-rings for little dancing-lasses . . .
A skein of yellow beads and lace . . . a yard of snake-tooth tea . . ."
Alack, poor Master Merrivein, in sorry plight was he!

Then mad they danced up Durley Hill, a-flitting back together
Like butterflies, all in the glad and golden Durley weather.

But what good Master Merrivein fetched home that morning early —
Go ask of Mistress Merrivein, on t' other side of Durley!



COUSIN JANE'S MISTAKE



(A Christmas Story.)

COUSIN JANE was an elderly lady who had never married, and who had outlived all her near relatives. A few cousins, some young and some old, some poor and some well-to-do, were all her kinsfolk; and having more money than she chose to spend for herself, she was generous to these cousins on birthdays and holidays.

One Christmas-time she was putting up a number of parcels to be sent by express to a number of people. Through an interruption, which caused some confusion in her arrangements and some hurry in their completion, two of the packages were misdirected; the one intended for a certain Miss Martha Redfield being carefully addressed to Miss Mary Rutherford, while Mary's parcel was as plainly marked with Martha's name. In her haste, and in the darkness of the waning afternoon, cousin Jane had also, quite unconsciously, exchanged her presentation cards, so that the message meant for Martha went into the box meant for Mary; and *vice versa*.

In due time each parcel was delivered according to its direction, if not according to intention; and when Martha Redfield, a bright-eyed girl of fifteen, opened hers, she beheld a charming box decorated with painted flowers and bows of satin ribbon.

"A box of candy!" she exclaimed in a tone of surprise.

"Is that all?" asked her mother, in a tone of disappointment. "Well, dear," she added more cheerfully, "you don't often have a present of candy. It will be a treat for you."

"Of course it will," said Martha.

Still, in each face was a wondering and unsatisfied expression.

"I don't know what I expected," Martha remarked presently, with a half-laugh. "And Cousin Jane is so good to us that I ought to be pleased with *anything* she sends. But — somehow —"

"It seems as if, when she was spending so much as this thing must have cost," added Mrs. Redfield, "she might better have sent you something useful."

"Well, I don't know."

Martha turned about, with a sudden change of tone:

"I 'm not sure but I like this better, after all. Cousin Jane always has sent useful things, because she knew we needed them. But just for once to be treated as if she *did n't* know we needed them! — as if we had as good a right to eat real good candy as her *rich* cousins — eh, mother?"

"If you look at it that way —! But a beaver muff would keep your hands warmer."

"Never mind! We 've got the candy, and I 'm going to sample it right away. Which will you have — buttercups or violets? Here's all kinds," cried Martha, defying her plurals recklessly. "Nut-caramels — heavenly! And nougats, and fig-paste — real lumps of delight! Help yourself, mother! It's no use denying that a box of candy is exciting," she rattled on. "Did I ever have one before? Oh, what is this, I wonder?" as she spied a tiny box wedged between two candied apricots. "What do you think it is, mother? 'Something nice for Betsy Price'? But somehow," — her eyes shining with a new excitement, — "it does n't look — exactly — like a sugar-plum."

"It looks much more like a ring," said Mrs. Redfield.

"And so it is. Why, *mother!*"

Martha's eyes grew round as moons, for the lid of the little satin-lined case had sprung open and a lovely single pearl, set on a slim gold hoop, revealed itself.

"A pearl ring!" exclaimed Mrs. Redfield, equally excited. "Well, that *is* a surprise!"

Martha clasped her hands and rolled up her eyes like a tragedy queen. "The desire of my heart, the dream of my life!" she cried. "But it can't be true. I'm asleep in the middle of a fairy-tale. I shall wake up in the moonlight with a cold in my head, and the pearl will be a popcorn; I'm sure of it."

"Don't be silly," said her mother. "If it's a fairy-tale, Cousin Jane is the fairy—as usual. Here's her card."

She had found a slip of pasteboard with Cousin Jane's name on one side, and on the other, in her prim, old-fashioned writing:

Merry Christmas to my dear Cousin, with the hope that this little gift will prove useful and ornamental.

The package addressed to Miss Mary Rutherford was left at a very different-looking place from the plain little home of the Redfields. It was a delightful old red-brick house set in the midst of vines and shrubbery, and its big, sunny parlor, full of books and pictures and flowers and singing-birds and easy-chairs, was equally unlike the Redfield sitting-room, with its faded carpet and well-worn furniture. The mother and daughter were different also. Mary Rutherford was only a year older than Martha, but she was taller and prettier and better dressed, and looked like a young lady, while Martha looked like a school-girl. She had soft, white hands that had never been roughened by work, and sweet, graceful manners that made you certain she had always been shielded from disagreeable things. In fact, she looked like one of the lilies that toil not, neither do they spin. And her mother had the same air of gentle refinement.

"What has Cousin Jane sent you, my dear?" as the parcel was opened. "Something pretty, of course."

"Ye-s," was the daughter's rather hesitating

answer. "Pretty enough, I suppose. It seems to be a sort of work-bag."

Mrs. Rutherford raised her eyebrows.

"A work-bag? How curious! Let me see it."

Mary handed it to her mother, and they inspected it together. It was quite large, and made of plum-colored silk with a sky-blue lining and satin drawing-strings. A circle of little pockets were each ornamented with a motto embroidered in blue floss, and inside were a number of working-implements,—scissors, thimble-case, emery-cushion, and darning, all handsomely mounted in silver. The pockets were filled with papers of needles and spools of silk and thread. It was a completely furnished work-bag, in short, and thoroughly satisfactory—as a work-bag. But as a present it seemed to be a failure.

Mrs. Rutherford looked curiously at the mottoes on the pockets.

"They seem to be very nicely worked," she said. "But I can't quite make them out. Can you?"

"Oh, yes, mama. One of them is, 'Never too late to mend.'"

"Very appropriate, I'm sure."

"But rather pointed, don't you think, mama? Another is, 'A stitch in time saves nine.' Does Cousin Jane think that I go in rags and tags, do you suppose?"

"Oh, it is only a decoration," said her mother. "It is the fashion nowadays to revive old-fashioned things."

"Here is one from the Bible," continued Mary. "'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' And here is another, from Proverbs, is n't it? 'She worketh willingly with her hands.' It is a bagful of good advice. I dare say I needed it."

"Did Cousin Jane's card come with it?" asked Mrs. Rutherford. "Perhaps she did not send it, after all. It would be much more like Grandmother Darrow."

"Oh, no! Dear old Grandmother Darrow sent me a bead reticule—don't you remember? And here's the card, besides: 'Kindest love to my dear Cousin, and wishing she may always possess the pearl of great price.' What has the pearl of great price got to do with a silk work-bag, mama?"

"I'm sure I don't know! Unless she thinks

that King Lemuel's is the only pattern for a perfect woman."

"It is not quite clear, even so," returned Mary. "But it is a handsome bag, at all events."

She took it quietly to her room, and no more was said about it. But in her heart she was mortified and disappointed. Cousin Jane's gifts to her, hitherto, had always seemed to confer, and imply, a sort of distinction. Her choicest books, the Parian statuettes on her mantel, the fine engravings that decorated her own room, the Florentine mosaics that were her prettiest ornaments,—all these were tokens of Cousin Jane's good taste, and tributes to her appreciation of it. She had never sent her anything commonplace before; and far from expecting it on this occasion, Mary had dreamed of something still more individual and significant. It was only a word of Cousin Jane's, a smiling allusion to her pretty hands, that gave her the idea. "But I thought," said Mary, as her pretty hands hung up the bag—"I did think she meant to send me a pearl ring!"

In due time Cousin Jane, who had never suspected her mistake, received two letters of acknowledgment. The first, from Martha, was overflowing with gratitude:

How can I thank you enough, you dear, *dear* Cousin Jane, for your beautiful gift? Ornamental? I never had anything so ornamental before! And useful, too, in a way that I feel better than I can express. How came you to guess at the wish of my heart? It's like a lovely dream come true. Thank you a thousand times, dear Cousin Jane, for your constant kindness to
Your grateful, affectionate MARTHA.

The one from Mary Rutherford was cooler in its tone:

DEAR COUSIN JANE: Thank you very much for your kind gift. I hope it will help me to find "pearls of great price"—more than one of them, perhaps. I am ashamed to own that I have not been a diligent seeker after such treasure. But "it is never too late to mend," and some day I hope you will see that your suggestions have taken effect. With best love from mama and my brothers,
Your always affectionate cousin,

MARY RUTHERFORD.

These letters were rather puzzling to Cousin Jane. She read Mary's twice over, and laid it down with a sigh.

"I must say it is hardly what I expected from her," she soliloquized. "But poor little Martha is pleased, at any rate. She seems more delighted with her work-bag than Mary with her pearl ring. I took pains with that ring, too. It's a very fine pearl, whether she knows it or not. She never even mentions the candy, either, though I thought most girls were pleased with good candy in fancy boxes. Hopes I will see that my suggestions have taken effect—what does she mean by that, I wonder? I think I'll have to write and ask her."

But Cousin Jane was not given to letter-writing, except on business. She had considerable correspondence of that sort, and many other ways of using her time; so she never wrote to Mary, after all. Some months later, however, she had occasion to visit the distant city where the Rutherfords lived; and after settling her business affairs, she went to spend the night with her cousins.

It was always pleasant to visit them; for she liked the atmosphere of the house. Mrs. Rutherford was a very gracious lady, gentle and kindly; her sons were well-bred, intelligent young men; and Mary, who had been a lovely child always, seemed to her now quite the ideal young girl, pure and fair as a lily, without and within. Secretly, Cousin Jane had always been a little sentimental about Mary Rutherford. She never said so to any one; but in her heart she loved her best of all the cousins.

That evening, as she sat alone with Mary in her own room, she thought the young girl looked more like a lily than ever. Mary had asked her to come in for a bedtime talk after she had said good-night to the rest of the family; and Mary began the talk with a sweet seriousness that her cousin found charming.

"I've been wishing for a long time to see you all by myself," she said. "There were too many things to write, and I never can write a letter that satisfies me, either. But I did want you to know how much a certain present of yours had done for me."

"Really? I wonder you don't wear it, then?" for Cousin Jane had noticed with surprise that the pearl ring was not on her finger.

"I can't exactly wear it," Mary answered,

surprised in her turn; "but it has been about with me a great deal, I assure you. And without vanity, I think I can tell you that it has done a good work for an idle, self-indulgent girl."

"If you are the girl, I never heard you described by those adjectives," said Cousin Jane, warmly.

"Because every one has spoiled me. You were the first one to suggest to me that it was never too late to mend."

"That's news too," returned her cousin. "I never thought, myself, that you needed mending. What *do* you mean, child?"

"Why, the work-bag, you know. Don't you remember that beautiful silk bag, with the proverbs on the pockets, and the silver things inside? The card, too, with such a dear wish on it? Here it is, Cousin Jane, card and all. It has been my best friend ever since you sent it; though I am ashamed to confess that it was a disappointment—just at first."

She took the work-bag from its hook, as she spoke, and held it up before her cousin, who could hardly believe the evidence of her own eyes.

"What are you doing with Martha's bag?" was her astonished outcry. "I never sent that thing to you. I sent it to Martha Redfield."

"To Martha Redfield?" Mary repeated, dropping the bag in her bewilderment. "What do you mean, Cousin Jane? *Who* is Martha Redfield?"

"One of my cousins. At least her father was. He is dead now, and she and her mother have none too much to live upon. Martha is in the High School, and means to teach as soon as she can?"

"And you sent the work-bag to *her*? You meant the mottoes for *her*? And the card too?"

"I never noticed that there were any mottoes," said Cousin Jane. "I bought the bag at the Woman's Exchange. It looked strong and serviceable, and I knew Martha would have plenty of use for such a thing. I put the silver scissors, and so forth, inside, to make it a little more festive. As for the card,"—holding it up to the light, and studying it through her spectacles,—"*that* has no business to be here.

It should have gone with the pearl ring, of course."

"The pearl ring?" exclaimed Mary, catching her breath sharply.

"Certainly. The ring that I sent you in a box of candy."

"A box of candy, too? *Cousin Jane!*"

Mary sat down hastily, and stared before her with an unusual look in her face. Her hands clenched themselves in her lap; she bit her lips to crush back rising tears; and presently she laughed hysterically.

"I hope," she sobbed, unable to control herself any longer—"I hope Martha Redfield is happy with my ring! It was the thing I *wanted* you to give me! And one does n't have a box of candy every day—but you like a little—to offer your girl-friends—"

She broke down with a sob; and Cousin Jane, seeing the truth at last, cried out indignantly:

"You shall have another box to-morrow! And Martha shall send back the ring. She might have known it was not meant for her! Never mind, my dear. I suppose I must have made a stupid mistake. I'm getting old, child! But it won't take long to settle this business. I'll stop and see Martha on my way home to-morrow."

"No, no, Cousin Jane! *Please* don't!"

Mary pulled herself together with a brave effort.

"I could n't bear to have that done," as she dashed away her tears. "Just fancy how she would feel! Oh, I know by myself. *Please don't!*"

"But I meant it for you," protested Cousin Jane, clasping Mary's hand and stroking it fondly. "This is just the dear little hand to wear pearls. They suit it, and they suit *you*."

"How sweet to have you say so!" And Mary blushed with pleasure, but persisted still: "Martha thinks you meant it for *her*, all this time; and how mortifying it would be to have to give it up to another girl now! It was foolish and babyish of me to cry about it. I am ashamed of myself; and really I *could n't* take it from her. I should always feel as if I had robbed her, and so would she. Besides,"—with a sunshiny smile, and a squeeze of Cousin



"DID COUSIN JANE'S CARD COME WITH IT?" ASKED MRS. RUTHERFORD.

Jane's hand,—“I should have to give up my beloved work-bag, don't you see? And I can't possibly part with that. You listen now till I tell you what a Moral Regenerator my bag has been.”

There was a long talk after this—the sort of talk that girls pour out sometimes to sympathetic older people who are not their mothers or sisters. Cousin Jane discovered that, sweet and lily-like as Mary always was, she had been in danger of growing up indolent, purposeless, even selfish; and that the work-bag and its pointed texts had opened her eyes to that fact. The inference that things were different nowadays followed naturally. It appeared, that Mary's mother had been relieved of various household cares—“all the mending, for instance!”—and that the Moral Regenerator had been the leader in organizing a guild to work for the Children's Hospital, where just such work was needed. Mary was very simple and modest about it all, but very much in earnest, full of enthusiasm and self-forgetting interest. Listening to her, Cousin Jane thought that putting one's heart into such work might be one of the ways of seeking, and finding, “the pearl of great price.”

Late in the afternoon of another day, she stopped over a train on her way home, to call upon the Redfields. She had faithfully promised not to speak of the mistake which had been made; but after this talk with Mary, she was curious to see if the ring had a story to tell as well as the work-bag.

Fortunately, Mrs. Redfield was not at home. Martha sat alone in the little parlor, studying her lessons between firelight and twilight; but she sprang up to greet her visitor with evident delight.

“Cousin Jane! You are the person I was wishing for just this minute. It's like a fairy godmother that comes when you think of her.”

“Indeed? And why did you happen to think of a fairy godmother just now?” asked Cousin Jane, smiling as she took the easy-chair which Martha drew up to the grate for her.

“I don't know. I was trying to study my lessons, but the firelight kept shining on *this*,”—lifting up her ring-finger,—“and then I fell

to thinking of you, and wishing I could tell you something.”

“So you can, you see. I have come to listen to you.”

“I see you have! And it truly is like a fairy godmother,” cried Martha, her eyes dancing with happy excitement. “But it's been a sort of fairy-tale, you know, ever since I got my ring. Did you guess that it was going to make a real happy little girl, a real good little girl, out of cross-patch Martha?”

“Was n't she happy and good before?” asked Cousin Jane.

“Well—not much. Not always, anyhow.”

Martha laughed, and poked the fire till the sparks flew up.

“You see, it comes easy to some girls to be angels,” she continued; “but I'm not one of them.”

“Comes easy?—why? Because their lives are easy?”

“Partly. It's easier to be good, of course, when you're comfortable, and you know your mother is n't worrying about the house rent, or your winter clothes, or—‘any old thing’! But some girls are good in spite of all that. They have been born sweet, you see, and trials only make them sweeter. Little Martha was n't cut by their pattern.”

“What is Martha's pattern, then?” laughed Cousin Jane.

“She was cut on the bias, I'm afraid. And it made her pull the wrong way. She used to look at everything through blue glasses.”

“Used to? And what does she do now?”

“She looks through a big, beautiful pearl,” said Martha, gaily; “and it makes all the difference in the world.”

“Suppose you tell me about it,” returned Cousin Jane, very much interested. “I always liked the fairy-tale about pearls and toads.”

“It is n't quite so bad as that! But still it's bad enough. May I sit on the hassock at your feet while I tell you? And do you mind not having the gas lighted?”

“Not at all. I can see your face by the fire-light.”

“I think I did n't want you to see my face,” Martha replied, settling herself on the hassock.

"But no matter. I'm going to make an honest confession."

"That 's always good for the soul, my dear."

"Gip?" Cousin Jane looked puzzled.

"Spelled backward," repeated Martha.

"Oh!" And Cousin Jane understood.

"Yes, just so! As I remarked, you 've been awfully good to us, and *mother* has been grateful. She has welcomed the new gowns, and the old ones to make over. She has blessed you, with tears in her eyes, for the checks that carried her through tight places. As for me, I 've said in my heart every time, 'Cousin Jane treats us like paupers, and we *are* paupers; but I hate it—I hate it—I hate it! I wish she would ever send us something that we *did n't* need.'"

"Oh!" said Cousin Jane again.

And Martha said again, her cheeks red with honest blushes:

"Yes, just so! I was as mean as that, and I never, never deserved to be rewarded with this dear, lovely ring. But, all the same, it was a beautiful inspiration. What made you think of it, Cousin Jane? I wish you 'd tell me!"

"Impossible, my dear," replied Cousin Jane, remembering her promise to Mary. "Perhaps it was just a beautiful inspiration, as you say."



"I THINK I DID N'T WANT YOU TO SEE MY FACE," MARTHA REPLIED, SETTLING HERSELF ON THE HASSOCK.

"You 've been very good to mother and me, Cousin Jane. And my name is Gip," was Martha's beginning. "Only you have to spell it backward."

"It has been one to me, at all events. I don't know if I can make you understand, but it uplifted me, and it cast me down. It made me proud, and it made me ashamed."

"They were natural feelings," said Cousin Jane, kindly; "and both were wholesome."

"You think so? Oh, you *do* understand!" Martha exclaimed fervently. "How glad I am of the chance to talk it out with you! I'm not a shining light yet—far from it. But whenever I look at this pearl, I think of what I *ought* to be, and it gives me some of the right kind of thoughts—it truly does."

"I'm truly glad to hear it, Martha."

"I thought you'd like to know that it puts a kind of pearliness into all my views of life. And, on the other hand,"—with a twinkle of fun in her honest eyes,— "when the girls admire it, and envy me, it's no use denying that I do feel kind of biggety."

"Biggety?" repeated Cousin Jane; and Martha laughed, and explained.

"A little toploftical, I mean. There is n't a girl in class who has anything to compare with my ring; and it does make me feel so—becoming to myself."

"You foolish child!"

But Cousin Jane liked the foolishness, and sympathized with the girlish confidences, which were different from Mary Rutherford's, but as natural and innocent in their way.

Mrs. Redfield came in by and by, and the gas was lighted, and Martha ran off to make a cup of tea for her visitor. Afterward she went down to the railroad station with her; and Cousin Jane thought, as she kissed her good-by, that her mistake had done no one any harm. On the contrary, it had shown her, as she might never have seen it otherwise, the true natures of two lovable girls.

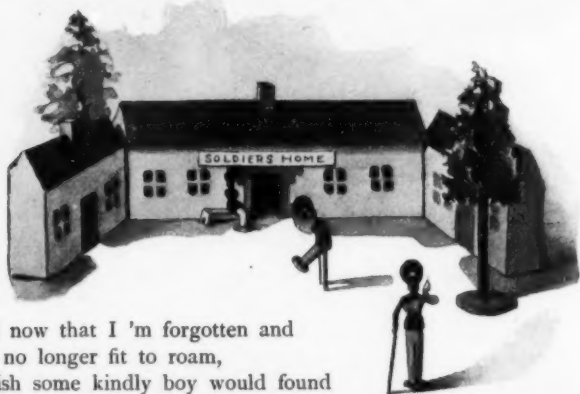
Mary E. Bradley.

THE BROKEN TOY SOLDIER.

BY MARGUERITE TRACY.

WE wear no medals on our breasts for gallant battles won;
No pension-bureau offers us reward for service done.
Yet no one of Napoleon's, nor one of Cæsar's host,
Has made himself a record such as even I can boast.

Toy soldiers must work harder than real troops, you see;
A march of fifty thousand miles is nothing much to me.
I lost a leg at Marathon, an arm at Monterey;
Was left for dead at Gettysburg—all on the self-same day.



And now that I'm forgotten and
no longer fit to roam,
I wish some kindly boy would found
a poor Toy Soldiers' Home.



BY AMELIA WOFFORD.

THE kings and queens of England, for a long time, in common with many of their subjects, kept men whose business it was to amuse them. These men were the court fools, or jesters, and were either half-witted persons called "natural" fools, or really bright men with the gift of singing humorous songs, telling laughter-provoking stories, and making witty speeches, called jesters or "artificial" fools.

That he must make merry at the king's bidding, be the jester sad or gay, was the only flaw in the jester's life. As he was a man of talent, and often of education, he was his royal master's companion; he was the recipient of frequent gifts; and though of humble birth, he would speak to the king as not even the son of a hundred earls dared. "Harry," was Will Sommers's familiar way of addressing King Henry VIII.; Scogan made Edward IV. the victim of his practical jokes; and Tarleton told Queen Elizabeth "more of her faults than did most of her chaplains."

Yellow was the fool's true color. His coat was motley or party-colored, sometimes decorated with bells at the skirt and elbows, and confined at the waist in a belt or girdle, from

which hung a large purse or wallet to receive the reward some happy jest or "merrie gambol" might bring forth. His breeches and hose were tight, each leg being of a different color. His headgear might be a round hat smartened by a long, curling feather; and the poet makes one of them say:

By my troth, the thing that I desire most
Is in my cappe to have a goodly feather.

Some wore a high-peaked cap like that worn by our clowns, or a monk's cowl winged with ass's ears, or terminating in the comb of a cock—from which fashion comes our word coxcomb, meaning a "vain, showy fellow."

The fool's official scepter, called his "bauble," was a short stick finished at the upper end with the figure of a fool's head, a puppet, or an inflated bladder, sometimes containing sand or dried peas. With this he would playfully belabor those that displeased him, or startle "inadvertent neighbors" by a clap from it; but, alas! it was sometimes used to chastise the fool himself when malapert.

Another dress that was also common in Shakspeare's time was the long tunic, or pet-

ticoat. This was originally worn by the "natural" fool, and was composed of sheepskin; but it was afterward adopted by the "artificial" fool, and made of some rich material.

Hitard, who was attached to Edmund Ironsides, is the first court jester of whom we have record. He owned the town of Walworth, a gift from the king. He held it through four succeeding reigns; and before leaving England for Rome, where he spent his last days, he presented it to the church, placing the deed upon the altar of the Cathedral of Canterbury.

Gallet, Galet, or Gollet, a native of Bayeux, was one of William the Conqueror's jesters. He was attached to William when only Duke of Normandy, and saved his master's life by disclosing a plot for his assassination. Berdic was another; he is enrolled in Domesday Book as *joculator regis*, and lord of three towns, all rent free, and five carucates* in Gloucestershire. Rahere was jester to Henry I., and William Piculph, or Picol, jester to King John. "Master Henry," who, it is thought, may be identical with Henry of Avranches, the poet-laureate or versificator, was jester to Henry III.

Scogan, Scoggin, or Scogin, already mentioned, was principal jester to Edward IV. He is said to have come of a good Suffolk family, was a graduate of Oxford, and for a time was tutor there, but was dismissed on account of his irreligious spirit and unscrupulous conduct. Upon this, he presented himself to Sir William Neville, solicited the place of jester, and was accepted. Sir William was very proud of him, and, one day, wishing to show him off, took him to court and introduced him to the king. Edward was as pleased as Sir William could have wished. In fact, he was so enthusiastic, he was unwilling to have Scogan leave. The king's wish was all-powerful, and so Sir William left Scogan, receiving in compensation a house in Cheapside and a country mansion in Bury.

Scogan loved a practical joke, and one that he perpetrated on the king brings to mind the fun of our burnt-cork minstrels. He borrowed money of the king, and, when the day for payment came, was unable to make good his word.

He feared the king's anger, and decided to appease him by a joke. Feigning death, he had his friends carry his body before Edward. The king fell a ready victim to the deception, and in his lamentations over the supposed dead fool said he freely forgave the debt. Scogan immediately sprang to his feet, exclaiming: "The news is so revivifying that it has called me back to life."

Henry VII. did not share the time-honored love of fools. He did not keep them, but his queen, the grave Elizabeth, had one, William.

With the reign of Henry VIII. began the heyday of the fool, and his disappearance dates from the rule of Cromwell.

Henry VIII. was a noted observer of the custom of keeping fools. Will Sommers, or Somers, was the best beloved of all the number. He is fully described in "A Nest of Ninnies," a quaint little book published in 1608, by Robert Armin, who had the honor of being an original performer in many of Shakspeare's plays.

Will Sommers, born in Shropshire, as some say, Was brought to Greenwich on a holy day,
Presented to the king; which foole disdained
To shake him by the hand, or else asham'd:
Howe'er it was, as ancient people say,
With much adoe was wonne to it that day.
Leane he was, hollow-eyde, as all report,
And stoop he did, too; yet in all the court
Few men were more belov'd then was this foole,
Whose merry prate kept with the king much rule.
When he was sad, the king and he would rime:
Thus Will exiled sadness many a time.

The king would ever grant when he would crave,
For well he knew Will no exacting knave:
But wisht the king to doe good deeds great store,
Which caus'd the court to love him more and more.

One of the good deeds that are credited to Sommers was done just before the king's death, and in favor of Sommers's old master, Richard Farmor, of Northamptonshire. Farmor had been found guilty of an offense against the king, although his deed was what we should consider an act of charity. To punish the offender, Henry seized his property, reducing him to great distress. The case touched Sommers's sympathy, and in the king's last illness he in-

*A carucate is an old Norman measure for land, and was from 80 to 100 acres; the word comes from *caruca*, a plow or team of oxen.

fluenced him to restore to Farmor what was left of his estate.

Sommers, like Scogan, liked a practical joke, and one that he played on Cardinal Wolsey is thus quaintly told by Armin :

Of a time appointed the king dined at Windsor, in the Chappel yard at Cardinall Wolsey's at the same time when he was building that admirable work of his tombe; at whose gate stood a number of poore people, to be served with alms when dinner was done within; and, as Will passed by, they saluted him, taking him for a worthy personage, which pleased him. In he comes, and finding the king at dinner, and the cardinall by attending, to disgrace him that he never loved, Harry, says hee, lend me ten pounds. What to doe? saies the king. To pay three or foure of the cardinall's creditors, quoth hee, to whom my word is past, and they are now come for the money. That thou shalt, Will, quoth hee. Creditors of mine? saies the cardinall: Ile give your grace my head if any man can justly aske me a penny. No! saies Will. Lend me ten pounds; if I pay it not where thou owest it, Ile give thee twenty for it. Doe so, saies the king. That I will, my liege, saies the cardinall, though I owe none. With that he lends Will ten pounds. Will goes to the gate, distributes it to the poore, and brought the empty bag. There is thy bag againe, saies hee; thy creditors are satisfied, and my word out of danger. Who received? saies the king; the brewer or the baker? Neyther, Harry, saies Will Sommers. But, cardinall, answered me in one thing: to whom dost thou owe thy soule? To God, quoth hee. To whom thy wealth? To the poore, says hee. Take thy forfeit, Harry, says the foole; open confession, open penance: his head is thine, for to the poore at the gate I paid his debt, which hee yields is due: or if thy stony heart will not yield it so, save thy head by denying thy word, and lend it mee: thou knowest I am poore, and have neyther wealth nor wit, and what thou lendest to the poore God will pay thee ten fold; . . . The king laught at the jest, and so did the cardinall for a shew, but it grieved him to jest away ten pound so.

The precise date of Sommers's death is not known, but it is thought that he died not long before Armin's book, "A Nest of Ninnies," was published.

John Heywood, the poet and dramatist, sometimes styled "the Epigrammatist," was jester to Queen Mary. He had been a great favorite with her father, King Henry VIII., to whose court he was introduced by Sir Thomas More, and his acquaintance with Mary was from her childhood. In those early days he contributed considerably to the little princess's amusement. He was manager of a juvenile

company that played before her; he composed songs for her, sometimes making himself the subject, and on her eighteenth birthday he wrote a poem in her honor, in which she was flatteringly described.

On her marriage with Philip he composed a ballad for her; and at her coronation, when the grand procession, headed by the new queen clad in blue velvet and seated in her gilded chariot drawn by six horses, approached the palace, her old friend Heywood greeted her with an oration.

Heywood's influence with this morbid and sullen queen was most happy, and was undoubtedly due to long association and pleasant memories. He was often summoned to cheer her with his music and wit, and her last illness was lightened by his songs, recitations, and readings from his plays. "His merriments were so irresistible that they moved even the rigid muscles of Queen Mary," says one old writer, "and her sullen solemnity was not proof against his songs, his rhymes, and his jests."

Queen Elizabeth inherited much of her father's disposition; she was gay, fond of laughter and wit, and, like him, she surrounded herself with jesters. Tarleton was "the bright, particular star" of the number; Pace, Clod, and Chester were the lesser lights.

Tarleton was a native of Shropshire, and one day, while tending his father's swine, was met by an officer of the Earl of Leicester. The officer talked with him, and was so much pleased with his "happy unhappy answers" that he took him into his master's service, and from the Earl of Leicester's household he passed into the Queen's court.

Elizabeth was a very fond and indulgent mistress. She not only had him attend her at dinner, but when she dined abroad she took him to make sure of good entertainment; and "her highest favorites would in some cases go to Tarleton before they would go to the queen, and he was their usher to prepare their advantageous access to her. In a word, he told the queen more of her faults than most of her chaplains, and cured her melancholy better than all her physicians."

Besides being jester, Tarleton was also player to the queen, to which office he was appointed

in 1583. He had great fame as an actor, and appeared principally in rhyming compositions and jigs composed by himself, which he danced and sung. We would call him a comedian; it is said that his fun lay more in the telling than in the words, and that his mere appearance on the stage

tage thoroughly, but failed to discover the sheep. They were about to depart, when one of their number accidentally looked into the cradle, and — the stolen sheep lay there! The lad, who was supposed to be the thief, was brought before King James VI of Scotland. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to die. He began to plead with the king. He was a poor, ignorant fellow, he said; he had heard of the Bible and would like to read it through before he died. Would the king respite him until he did so? The king readily gave his consent, whereupon the culprit immediately said 'Then hang me



THE JESTER AND HIS FAITHFUL FRIENDS.

with his squint would send the people into shouts of laughter.

Archee Armstrong was the well-beloved jester of King James VI. of Scotland, afterward James I. of England, and this is the traditional story of their introduction:

"One day a shepherd with the carcass of a sheep upon his shoulders was tracked to his cottage on the moorlands by the officers of justice. In the cottage they found a vacant-faced lad, rocking a cradle with more attention than a boy is accustomed to give that duty; this, however, did not arouse their suspicions. They searched the cot-

if I ever read a word o' t, as lang as my een are open."

The witty reply captured the king. He pardoned the prisoner, and took him into his service as jester. In this capacity Archee was soon a prime favorite.

When James became James I. of England, he retained Archee as his jester, and besides made him a sort of gentleman groom of the king's chamber.

Archee was also jester for James's son, Charles I. In his boyhood, Charles treated Archee somewhat roughly, tossing the jester

in a blanket being a favorite diversion for him and his companions; but when he became king, he treated Archee with great generosity. Archee held the office of jester under Charles until 1637, when, for a too free use of his wit against Archbishop Laud, he was deposed and banished.

Of Muckle John, Archee's successor, little is known. It is said he "could not abide money," but he liked gay clothes, if an account of some articles of his wardrobe is taken as evidence:

A long coat and suit of scarlet-coloured serge, for Muckle John, £10 10s. 6d. One pair of crimson silk hose, and one pair of garters, and roses for Muckle John, 61s. For a pair of silk and silver garters, and roses and gloves suitable for Muckle John, 110s. For a hat covered with scarlet, and a band suitable, and for two rich feathers, one red, the other white, for Muckle John, 50s. Stag's-leather gloves, fringed with gold and silver. A hat band for Muckle John. One pair of perumed gloves, lined with sables, 5s.

Muckle John was the last of the court jesters. Tom Killigrew, Master of the Revels, Groom of the Bedchamber, is often spoken of as jester to Charles II., but there is no authority to support this claim. He was a companion of the king, he used his tongue with the license of the jester of old, but he had never an official appointment to that office. Some effort was

made during Charles's reign to restore the jester, but it failed.

The protests of Sir Philip Sidney and other grave writers of his time against all fools were not without effect, but the rule of the Commonwealth was mainly responsible for the banishment of the court fool. They were especially against the fools of the stage, and so playwrights omitted them from their list of characters long before their disappearance from the court. Shadwell's play of "The Woman Captain" (1680) is probably the last in which a regular fool appears. The character of fool was well liked by the old playwrights, and in several of the old plays his disappearance is bewailed.

As has been said, the custom of keeping fools was common to all classes of society in England; but the court sets the fashion, and with the banishment of the court jester the fool disappeared from his other haunts.

The king is dead, but the jester lives! His stage and court are the saw-dust ring. His jokes and pranks are old; we jest at them, but his mere appearance in his powder and patches and fantastic garb never fails to bring a smile of welcome from old and young.

Long live our jester!



THE CHRISTMAS SHIP.

By H. H. BENNETT.

WHEN Dolly Stafford looked out of the door of the deck-house, that December morning, she saw miles and miles of ice—ice in sheets and ridges and hills; in one place there would be a smooth expanse, stretching away as far as she could see; in another direction the splintered heaps sent their jagged pinnacles up in the air like mountain peaks. The air was cold—very cold; little particles of frozen snow were driven through it by the keen wind, and stung the skin like needles. On the deck it was sheltered and free from the driving snow; but the cold wind searched out every corner, and Dolly, after one peep, was glad to run down the companion-way to the warm cabin below.

In the cabin sat Dolly's aunt and uncle: her uncle was Captain Ferry, and the cabin was that of his whaling vessel, the "Blackbird." The Blackbird was frozen in the ice, in the Arctic Ocean, north beyond the seventieth parallel of latitude, which is very far north indeed. In the summer the ship had sailed up through the Pacific Ocean, and stopped at Unalaska, that lonely port on Unalaska Island, which is the beginning of the Aleutian islands, the chain which stretches out toward Asia from the end of the Alaskan peninsula. After taking on coal and provisions the Blackbird sailed on through Behring Sea and Behring Strait, into the Arctic Ocean. As long as the short Arctic summer lasted Captain Ferry had cruised about in search of whales, sailing eastward, past Cape Barrow, along the desolate northern coast of Alaska and British Columbia, as far as Cape Bathurst, the rocky, barren end of which runs northward into the sea just west of the big and little islands which make up the frozen Arctic archipelago. When the summer was drawing to an end, and the time was close at hand when the long, northern night would put an end to looking for whales, the vessel's prow was turned westward, and Captain Ferry sailed

away to Herald Island, where he intended to stay all winter. When they got to the island Dolly found that it was nothing but a barren land of great rocks, covered with ice and snow; but in the little bay where the Blackbird's anchor was dropped, there were fourteen other ships, whose captains were going to winter there, just as Dolly's uncle meant to do. Everything about the ship was made snug; the sailors built a roof over the deck, and closed the sides, so that it was a house; then the snow fell and covered the ship, until it looked like a white hill, with pathways cut into it where the sailors came and went.

On the "Jennie Davis," one of the other ships, lived Jessie Condon, whose father was commander of the Jennie; and Jessie and her mother had come with him for a voyage in the almost unknown seas above the Arctic Circle. Some of the captains of the other ships were accompanied by their wives, but Dolly and Jessie were the only girls in the fleet,—the only white girls, perhaps, within the whole Arctic Circle. Jessie was eleven, just a year younger than Dolly; and the two soon became fast friends. When Jessie was not visiting Dolly on the Blackbird, Dolly was pretty sure to be on board the Jennie Davis with Jessie, until the captains and the captains' wives and the sailors said that they hardly knew to which ship the two girls belonged.

Dolly and Jessie found plenty of ways to play when the mercury did not drop down to forty degrees below zero, as it did, frequently, for days together. Sometimes the sailors bundled them up on Eskimo sledges, and hauled them for miles over the ice; at other times they went fishing, dropping their lines into holes which the sailors cut through thin places in the ice, where it was not more than three or four feet thick. There were Eskimo dogs on the ships, and the sailors trained them to act as

pack-mules; two bags were hung on each dog, one on each side, and the fish which were caught were put in these bags; then the dogs trotted along very carefully, so as not to drop the fish. When they got tired they would lie down on the ice to rest, and would get up and trot off without losing a fish. Sometimes the dogs were hitched to sledges, and the girls were whirled over the ice so fast that they clung to the sides of the sledge to keep from falling off.

When Dolly went outside the ship she looked more like a little Eskimo than like the girls at home. She wore the heaviest of woolen clothes in the cabin, but these were not enough to keep her warm when she and Jessie went on the sledges or went fishing. At such times she put on a coat of deerskin, which went to her feet; it was lined with flannel, and trimmed with fur, and had a hood which could be pulled over her head and face; the hood was lined with wool and trimmed with the fur of the wolverine. Woolen stockings and gloves covered her feet and hands, and on top of these she wore Eskimo boots of fur, and deerskin mittens lined with wool. Jessie dressed in the same way; but her coat was trimmed with mink, and her boots were of sealskin.

Out on one of the ice-hills, old Tom Barks, the boatswain of the Blackbird, who made it his special duty to look after Dolly and Jessie, made them a toboggan slide, down which their sledges would rush, to sweep far out on the ice-plain; then some of the sailors would haul them back and to the top again, for another swift, breathless dash down the glassy slope. In the mornings there were lessons to be learned and recited, for Dolly's aunt did not believe in "all play and no work"; so Dolly, and Jessie too, had geography and spelling, arithmetic and reading, just as though they were not hundreds of miles away from any school. Dolly studied French, also; and both of them were learning to play on the mandolin and guitar, for several of the captains' wives had their instruments with them, and were accomplished musicians.

One day Captain Ferry had killed a great white bear; and Dolly and Jessie had watched the whole hunt from the top of the deck-house,

and had been so excited that they nearly fell off. The bear had been prowling around the ships all the night before, and Captain Ferry said he was going after it because he wanted its shaggy, white-furred skin for a rug, and because it was a dangerous animal to be in the neighborhood of the ship. So in the morning he started off, going in a boat part of the way, for the wind had caused a wide crevasse to open in the ice not far from the ship. The bear was lying down behind a hummock of ice when the captain shot it; it did not seem to mind the bullet, but got up and started after the captain, who ran as hard as he could toward the boat, into which he jumped, and the sailors pushed off. The angry bear did not stop at the water, but plunged in and began to swim after the boat. The sailors had not got a good start, and the bear swam so fast that it got one paw on the boat before the captain could shoot it.

But Dolly was not thinking of the fishing, or lessons, or even of the bear-hunt, this morning, for her mind was full of plans for Christmas, which was only three days away. She and Jessie had determined, with the consent of her aunt and Jessie's mother, to have this Christmas different from other Christmases. This had been decided upon several weeks ago, and since that time the very air had been full of mystery; and the girls had gone about with faces which seemed to say that the two bore all the responsibility of the whole fleet on their shoulders. Mrs. Ferry had given them the use of one of the staterooms, into which no one but the girls was allowed to enter without permission; and they bustled in and out of it all day, smuggling in mysterious bundles and packages; and from the room came shouts of laughter or ecstatic squeals of delight as their plans seemed to be progressing to their satisfaction. They had held deep conferences with the boatswain; and old Tom had been called into the mysterious stateroom, and had emerged therefrom with his face purple with suppressed laughter.

Something seemed to be going wrong this morning, however, to judge by Dolly's face; and she had climbed up and down the companion-way three times, looking for Jessie, who

finally came, all muffled up until she seemed an animated bundle of furs.

"What are we going to do?" demanded Dolly, as soon as Jessie had taken off her wraps, and the two were in their own especial room. "We can't have any tree."

"Not have any tree?" said Jessie, her eyes growing big with astonishment. "Did your aunt say we should n't?"

"Why, no; of course not. We can do anything we please, so long as we don't set the ship on fire. But where are we going to get a tree?"

"Where?"

"Yes—where? Here we have been going ahead as if we could go down to the market and buy one; or else have some one chop down a tree out in the woods. And there are no woods!"

"I never thought of that."

"Neither did I, until I asked Tom if he would n't get us a tree; and he said there was n't a tree within six hundred miles."

"Oh, and we've gone and invited all the people, too;" and Jessie looked as though she were going to cry. For the girls had said that this was going to be their Christmas, because the older ones made Christmases for them at home, and they wanted to make Christmas for them up here, where everything was different.

"We must do something; we just *have* to do something. They'll all say we had to come to them for help, after all. I'm going to call Tom; and while I'm gone you think as hard as ever you can."

Dolly hurried out of the room; and Jessie, with her elbows on her knees and her chin on her palms, proceeded to think as deeply as she could. Her thinking did not seem to result in anything, for her face got longer and longer; and she was on the verge of tears and despair when Dolly came flying back, with the boatswain following her.

"Oh, Jessie, something perfectly splendid! And Tom says we can do it, too."

"What is it? Get a tree from the Mazinkas? Oh, Tom, can you?"

The Mazinkas were an Eskimo tribe, members of which had been hanging around the ships, begging for food, or knives, or old iron;

and the girls had learned to talk to them in their strange, guttural language; and had played with the funny little babies, which were carried in the hoods on the backs of their mothers' fur coats.

"No, miss; them poor Mazinkas can't get any more trees than we can," said the boatswain; "they'd have to make a mighty long trip to get to where anything like trees grow; and then they'd only be little bushes, not what we'd call trees."

"What is it, then?"

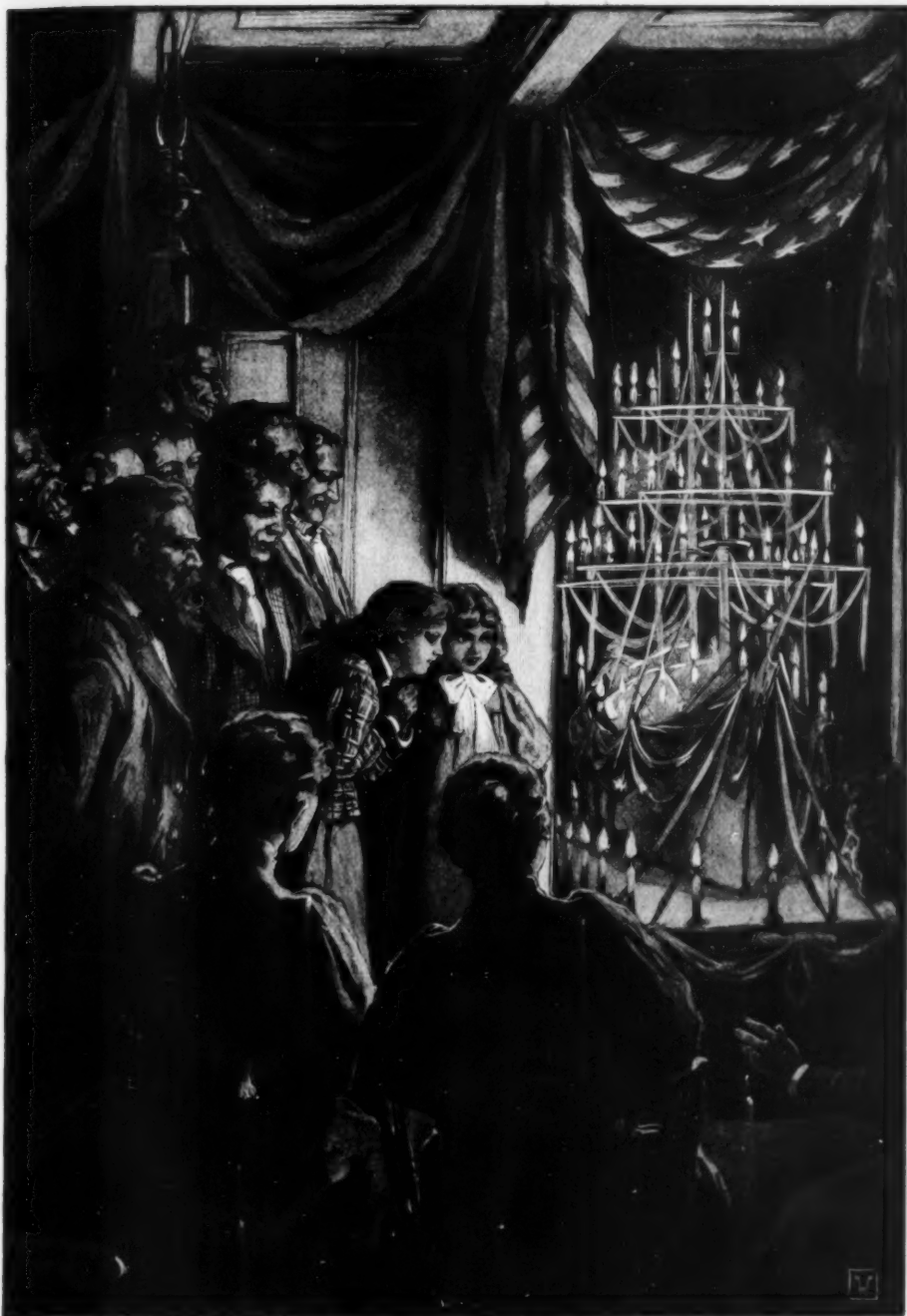
"Oh, it's lovely," said Dolly; "perfectly lovely. Is n't it, Tom?"

"Yes, I guess it is," chuckled Tom; "and Chips, he—"

"Don't talk so loud; they'll hear you. Come over here."

The two curly heads and the grizzled one came together in a corner; and Dolly unfolded her plan, interrupted by Jessie's exclamations of delight and the boatswain's chuckles and comments and advice, delivered in a rumbling whisper, his good-natured, weather-beaten face all wrinkled with laughter as at a good joke.

The next two days were busy ones for the girls. Lessons had been laid aside for the Christmas week, and they could devote all their time to their preparations. There was much going to and fro between the ships; frequent conferences with the boatswain, and with Chips, the ship's carpenter, who was called into consultations from which he came with a broad smile on his face; and he and the boatswain were busy with some mysterious work down below,—work which could not be done without frequent visits from Dolly and Jessie, and much chuckling on the part of the two old sailors. Then there were visits to the Mazinka village, made in Tom's charge, when much trading was done, and the girls gave pieces of iron, old knives, and gay-colored calico for various specimens of Eskimo handiwork. Sometimes they ventured into the curious, round huts of the villagers,—huts made of earth and stones, and entered by a tunnel-like way, through which the girls crawled on their hands and knees; but the huts were so dirty, and the stone lamps, which swung from the low roof and served both for heat and light, gave out



"THE DOOR SWUNG WIDE AND A SHIP CAME SAILING TOWARD THEM; CANDLES BURNED BRIGHTLY UPON EVERY MAST AND YARD." (SEE PAGE 130.)

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such a fishy, oily smell that the girls preferred to do their trading in the open air.

On the day before Christmas the girls and Tom decorated the main cabin of the Blackbird. Evergreens were not to be had; not the smallest bit of greenery could they find in that desolate region; so they draped the walls with flags, of which each vessel had a plentiful store. Russian and German and English ensigns made a brilliant showing, but above them all and brighter than any was the Stars and Stripes, the brave old flag, which, to the two girls, thousands of miles from home, meant more than ever before; and Tom handled it with the touch that comes to those who have sailed under its folds or marched beneath it, for Tom had been a man-o'-war's man in days gone by, and the flag to him was home and friends and country.

When the decorating was all done, the girls asked Captain and Mrs. Ferry to go in their stateroom, and stay there for half-an-hour, saying that part of the Christmas had to come through the cabin, and that no one must see it until everything was ready. Then came most mysterious bumps and thumps on the companion-ladder, and a sound of hauling, followed by a subdued noise of hammering, and delighted exclamations from the girls, so that the captain and his wife wondered what was going on, and looked around with much curiosity when, at last, they were told that they might come out. But nothing rewarded their looking, for they could see nothing but the flags, and those they had seen before; and the two girls only laughed and skipped excitedly when asked what was going on.

The guests began to arrive before eight o'clock, and all of them were soon there; there were the captains of all the ships, and half-a-dozen women who sailed with their husbands, and, in the background, were the sailors of the Blackbird and the Jennie Davis, who had taken the girls fishing, or had hauled them on their sledges. All were in their best clothes, smiling broadly, and a little nervous at being in the cabin.

When all the guests had come, and the heavy coats and furs, the hoods and deer-skin mittens had been laid aside, Dolly, who, with

her aunt and Jessie, had been busy welcoming each new arrival, stood up by a chair; and, holding to the chair-back for courage, said: "You know this is Jessie's and my Christmas; and we're very glad to see you all. We want it to be like Christmas eve at home, because home is so far away; and—and—now Jessie will recite 'The Three Kings.'" Dolly, blushing rosy red, sat down, while all clapped hands; and the big German Captain Amberg rumbled something in his great, flaxen beard about "mädchen" and "heimweh," and thought of the three girls across the wide seas, who, he knew, were thinking of their father at this Christmas time.

After Jessie had told how "Three kings came riding from far away, Melchior and Gaspar and Baltazar," Captain Ferry got up, red and bashful at first, in spite of years of experience and danger, and reverently read: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given"; and, as he read, his great voice, which could roar out commands above the shrieking of a tempest, became low and hushed and gentle; and his strong, weatherbeaten face was tender as a mother's, so that a little hush fell on the captains and the sailors, who knew what it meant to "go down to the sea in ships" and witness the power and "wonders in the deep," and so have a knowledge above the learning of landmen.

Then came the soft chords of Dolly's and Jessie's guitars; and, from copies of the song which had been handed around by the girls, the guests all sang:

When shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone round.

When the sailors caught the tune they sang lustily, and the big German captain grumbled a ponderous bass, so that the cabin rang.

When the last note had died away, Dolly said: "Now, Tom!" and the boatswain disappeared within the mysterious stateroom. There was a moment of waiting. Then every one leaned forward to see what was coming.

The door swung wide, and a ship came sailing toward them: not a little ship, but a

ship so large that it could hardly pass through the door; candles burned brightly upon every mast and yard; gay ribbons took the place of ropes; flags fluttered bravely from every possible place, and ran in a rainbow from bow to stern. On a sea of blue canvas it sailed, but from beneath came a sound suspiciously like wooden wheels. On the deck were piled odd-looking packages and knobby bundles; and at the helm stood a most life-like steersman, which a second look showed to be one of Jessie's dolls.

A shout of laughter and applause went up, and every one crowded around to get a closer view of the mimic vessel.

"Dolly thought of it," said Jessie; "and Chips made it out of boards and canvas; and Tom helped."

"Jessie did lots, too," Dolly exclaimed, determined that Jessie should share in the glory; "and the presents are from her just as much as from me. Now, if you 'll all please sit down, we 'll hand 'round the things."

There proved to be a present for everybody; when the pile on deck gave out, the girls reached down into the inside of the ship and brought out more. There were neck-cloths and little bags of smoking tobacco and clasp-knives and pipes from the ship's stores for the sailors; match-safes, embroidered handkerchief-cases, neckties, little pads of shaving paper, dust-cloths, all sorts of gifts, funny or useful, for the others, made by Dolly and Jessie; or

queer articles of Eskimo manufacture, which they had bought from the Mazinkas.

Every one laughed and compared presents; and they all laughed more than ever when, with a look of utter amazement, the girls began to bring to light various packages on which their own names were written.

"We had our little secret, too," said Mrs. Ferry. "And Tom—"

"I did n't tell. Indeed I did n't," broke in Tom.

"Neither did I," asserted Chips. "Tom and I both kept mum, Miss Dolly."

"I just took the things and packed 'em away under the other bundles," the boatswain said. "I did n't let on a word."

And out of that wonderful ship's hold came presents for the girls from every vessel in the fleet; the captains' wives gave them pretty articles they had made themselves; the captains had all contrived to find some gift; and the sailors gave bits of carved walrus ivory, funny articles which they had whittled out of wood, and all manner of quaint things which they fished out of the depths of their sea-chests.

Then the sailors went to their own quarters, while the rest talked and laughed and sang, and almost forgot that they were so far from the Christmases of home. Then, suddenly, "Hush!" said Captain Ferry. Through the great silence of the Arctic night came the sound of bells, the bells of the ships, ringing midnight; and Christmas day came softly in.

CHRISTMAS TWICE A YEAR.

BY GELETT BURGESS.

SOME children think that Christmas day
Should come two times a year;
But that is not at all the way
That it should be, I fear.

For in the summer Christmas-trees
Are very, very small;
And all the games and toys one sees,
They are not ripe at all!

The dolls are very tiny ones;
The wagons will not go;
The balls are littler than buns—
It takes them months to grow!

The candy it is, oh, so sour!
The guns they will not shoot;
There's need of many an autumn shower
To ripen Christmas fruit!



"TUG."



"PUNK."



"SAWED-OFF."



"JUMBO."

THE LAKERIM ATHLETIC CLUB.

By RUPERT HUGHES.



"B. J."



"SLEEPY."



"BOBBLES."



"QUIZ."



"PRETTY."



"THE TWINS."



"MIST'RY."

TWELVE of the boyishest boys that ever ornamented a dog's tail with a tin can, sprawled under a tree on the edge of a lake; and sulked.

Finally, one of them whined peevishly:

"Well, fellows, we might as well go and jump in the lake."

"And say, 'Here goes nothin'!'" groaned another.

Now, when one boy is gathered together, you expect just so much trouble—so many panes of glass to be replaced; so many neighbors to patch up peace with. When you see twelve boys' heads together you feel like calling out the fire department and the militia.

But here are twelve of

the most harmless-looking young gentlemen outside of a wax-works. What can have punctured the tire of the round world for them? Listen.

"To think that those all-fired Greenville cadets should simply beat the life out of us like that!"

"Say, were we trying to play football— or marbles?"

"We could n't beat the Greenville school for girls, to say nothing of their military academy!"

So they played tennis with the blues, till one boy spoke up and changed the game. They called him Tug. And Tug said:

"You fellows talk like a lot of cry-babies. Just because you got licked once, do you think the world 's coming to an end? Brace up!"

"It 's all very well for you to talk, Tug, but you did n't play against those blamed Greenville villains. You were in luck to get a sprained ankle just before the game, I can tell you. They gave me worse than that before I got through!" yowled one who looked like a leopard, when he went swimming; he had so many black and blue spots on him. But Tug persisted:

"You fellows deserved to get whipped."

"Why?" they all yelled, sitting up in anger and surprise.

"Because you did n't practise. You've got as good stuff in you as those cadets. But they spent their spare time working together, and every man watched his diet and made football his business. There was no fairy-story work about that game; they went in to win and they did it."

"Oh, it's all very easy for you to sit up and talk!" said a lanky boy called Punk, who had been captain of the defeated team, "but you'd talk out of the other side of your mouth if you had had the running of the team."

"Is that so?" answered Tug. "Well, I'll just bet I could fix up an eleven here that would lick the boots off 'em!"

"Well, why don't you?" said the old captain derisively.

"I'm not the captain" —

"Well, you can have my job right now."

"I'll take it! — that is, — no, of course, I don't want to shove myself in."

"Go on! You're all right! Take a shy at it," they all voted; and one cried: "Hooray for the new captain!"

A still small voice came from beneath a pug nose that bent under a pair of eye-glasses that gave him a wise look.

It was from the bookworm of the crowd, and he said:

"That reminds me of what they used to say, 'The King is dead! Long live the King!'"

"Dry up, Hist'ry, and give Tug a chance."

"Well, fellows, it takes a lot of nerve to grab Punk's place away from him like this" —

"You're quite welcome, I'm sure; and I wish you luck," said Punk with a very good grace.

"Put her there, Punk; you're a white man!" Tug had to exclaim, and the two captains shook hands without any of that silly jealousy that often mars athletics.

"When shall we begin practice? Monday? To-morrow?"

"Now!" cried Tug. "Every minute is a minute, and we've got fifteen of 'em before supper-time," and he leapt to his feet. "Hist'ry, you might be thinking up a good challenge to send them. We lost the game on our

home grounds. We've got to win it on theirs. Come ahead, boys!"

Tug's enthusiasm was as contagious as the mumps. In a moment he had his ten followers trailing out after him for a long run at a carefully regulated pace that began very slow, worked up to a good quick trot and a short spurt, and slowed down again to a jog.

An odd-looking dozen they make; an odds-and-ends dozen you might say, except that, next to bullying your smaller and putting tacks into bicycle paths, punning is the worst habit you can get into.

I won't give you the whole history of each of these fellows now — or ever — but some sort of a catalogue will be handy, if you are going far in their company.

I believe their fathers and mothers nicknamed them "Robert Williams" and "Clement Robinson" and "Thorndyke Pendleton" and such ridiculous things; but their real names were, of course, just what their chums chose to call them.

First came the new captain, Tug. His father when he was angry called him, "You-Clement-Robinson-come-here!" Every pound of flesh on him had to turn into muscle or get off. He was not a witty boy. He took everything earnestly, seriously, and ambitiously, his lessons as well as his games. He thought hard and fought hard and wrought hard. Such as he are the salt of the earth. Not the sugar, nor the pepper, nor the spice, but the salt. He was a born captain of men.

Close in the wake of him came Punk, the ex-captain, known to his teachers as Richard Malcolm. He was a fine fellow to obey and execute orders, but no man to invent them or see them obeyed. He was in the right place now. After him lumbered a boy so very tall that they called him "Sawed-Off," — his nickname was Thorndyke Pendleton. He managed not only to bruise Punk's heels, but also to bark the shins of the boy behind. And this was his particular chum, so tiny a rat that they called him "Jumbo"; the girls called him Billee Douglas. This minnow and this whale were the best friends of all "The Dozen."

After them came various boys of various sorts and sizes. One of them was dubbed

"B. J.," because that stands for bridge-jumper, and he had once dived off a railroad trestle about 'steen feet high, and had come up unconscious with mud oozing from his mouth and nose. They fished him out with a boat-hook, and his father, who was Henry Perkins, Senior, emptied him as if he were a hot-water bag, and afterward rolled him and kneaded him back to life and, let us hope, to more common sense.

In his footprints jogged a brick-top named "Reddy," and another one usually known as "Reddy's Brother," but also named "Heady," as like a pair of twins as ever puzzled strangers. In the family Bible they were written down on the same day as Ralph and Rolf Phillips. Then struggled along a lazy beggar named "Sleepy," sometimes called Charles Croft, by mistake; a living interrogation-point called "Quiz"—if you asked him he would say his real name was Clarence Randolph, but don't believe everything people tell you; a fellow named "Bobbles," alias Robert Williams, and one called "Pretty" (pronounced "Purty"); he had once been christened Edward Parker, but he had lived it down. And the twelfth was "Hist'ry."

In good season Tug brought them back to the tree, and all of them felt like dropping flat on the ground, but the captain forbade such rashness.

"It's against all the rules of training," he said. "If we had a nice gymnasium we could take a cold shower-bath, or a plunge, and rub down well; but it's too late even to go swimming. We'd better be pegging for home."

"Those blamed Greenville fellows have a gymnasium that is a beauty," complained Bobbles. "How can we expect to win without any advantages?"

"It is n't so much advantages as grit that counts," said Tug. "If we'll buckle to it we can—Here, you, Sleepy, get up from there! We're going home now."

Sleepy had come in last of all, and had dropped to the ground like a bag of beans.

"Aw, let a fellow alone," he mumbled. "I've got a right to rest, I guess."

"Well," said Tug, bluntly, "you've got a right to get off the team, too, I guess. If you are going to balk at the rules and run a risk of

catching cold and growing weaker instead of stronger after exercise, it's time we knew it. There are plenty of other fellows in the High School just aching for a chance to play in your place."

"Who's balkin'?" grumbled Sleepy, getting to his feet as quickly as if the grass had caught fire.

"Come along, then, fellows, and Hist'ry can read us his challenge as we go."

Then they set out at a brisk walk, all trying to read over History's shoulder at the same time, and all getting in the way of all.

This is what History read. (History's school-books had the name Willis Campbell written in them, though I can't imagine why.) He knew many big words by name, but his spelling was a bit shaky.

*The Managers and Members of the
Greenville Military Academy
Football Association.*

Gentlemen:

Whereas your magnificent aggergation of physical and mental champions have administered a crushing defeat to the Lakerims, we the undersigned respectfully request the honor of an opportunity of retreaving our lost laurels—

"What's 'laurels'?" said Quiz who was eternally asking questions.

"Why, laurels," said History, "are things the Greeks used to wear in their hair. They grow on a tree, and—"

"Go on with the letter!" said ten voices at once, and the explanation was postponed.

"—retreaving our lost laurels. We will play you on your own arena—or any place you may designate. We would respectfully suggest two (2) weeks from tomorrow (Saturday) as a suitable date.

Yours very truly,

*The Lakerim High School Football
Association.*

"That's great!" said Sawed-Off envying History his education.

"But you'd better send a dictionary with it," put in Jumbo.

"I presume they will comprehend it," answered History scornfully.

And it seems that they did comprehend it, for an acceptance came promptly, proposing that three fourths of the gate-receipts should go to the winner and one fourth to the loser. This was satisfactory.

The fateful Saturday saw the Lakerim team bundling into an omnibus bound for the neighboring town of Greenville. Everybody else that could get away from the village of Lakerim followed after, on bicycles and tandems and in carriages, buckboards, wagons — almost everything but sleighs and flying-machines. The

But Tug did n't believe in coddling a useless regret, so he braced up and said in a stout voice:

"Boys, we have n't any colors of our own, but we 'll make those purple flags look sick before the game is over — or die trying, eh?"

"That 's what!" the rest barked, taking on a new determination.

Tug had had little time to train his team — only the recesses of school-hours, the late afternoons and Saturdays — but he had done wonders with his materials, considering the time he

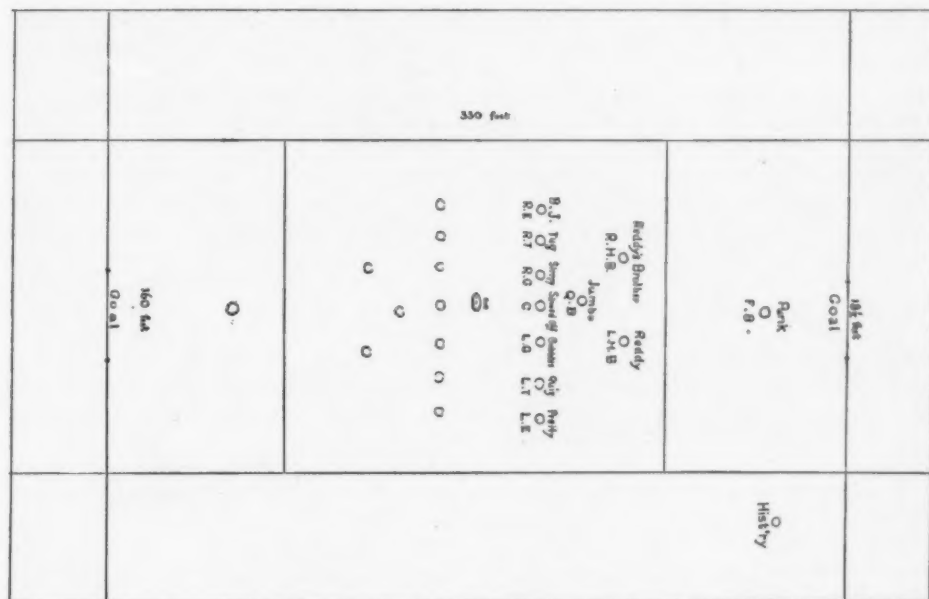


DIAGRAM OF THE FIELD AND THE POSITIONS OF THE DOZEN.

team was not sorry that most of the Lakerim beauties were in the crowd, and Pretty, who was a great ladies' man, wanted to get out and ride in one of the carryalls, but his jealous rivals held him back. When they arrived at Greenville and saw the good, well-fenced athletic field, with the pretty grand-stand, and the crowds of Greenville fathers and mothers and sweethearts covered with the Academy colors, Lakerim grew sick at heart, for our boys had no distinctive colors. They had neat uniforms, but these had no particular meaning.

He had enjoyed the aid of no professional coaches, nor any aid at all except a little advice from Mr. Bronson, one of the teachers of the High School, who had seen a few Yale games once. Tug knew nothing of the present condition of his rivals. He hoped that they had had their heads so turned by their easy victory before, that they had trained little. He hoped it and he did n't hope it, because he wanted a good hard battle to make the victory worth while or soothe the sting of defeat.

All that was in his power he had done. He

had made his men work, and work with system. They had taken their exercise and their meals regularly, and had solemnly promised to eat no candies or pies, and to keep strictly in training. He had labored with his players, separately and in the mass, till he was sure they could work together like one man, and every member of that one man would do the best that was in him—provided they did n't all get rattled.

But Tug had done such wonders for the team that when his men came out on the "grid-iron" they felt too great confidence in themselves, and almost believed that they could almost win by staring the other team out of conscience,—as they say one can stare an angry bull into subjection by the power of his eye—though I advise you to practise it first through a telescope.

After a little preliminary warming-up, in which the men practised falling on the ball and passing it, and got the general lay of the land, time was called. The captains met, and tossed up a very important penny. Tug won, and chose the northern goal because the wind was in his favor. It might change before the second half, and be in his favor again. At any rate Tug was always cautious, and believed that a wind in your favor is worth two in the almanac.

How they lined up is shown by the diagram on page 135.

The football was put in the exact center of the field, where it looked as interesting as if it were an egg the roc had laid there. The Lakerim line drew back ten yards and waited. After a while of breathless pause, the Greenville boys dashed forward. There was the sudden thump of the kick-off, and the ball went up in the air as if it slid on the grooves of a rainbow. It soared slowly up and came leisurely down. Beneath it was a pretty struggle. Tug's men blocked the onset as well as could be expected; but two or three hungry wolves got through the hedge and came leaping toward Punk, who, as full-back, waited with open arms and mouth for the ball. It seemed that it never would come down; but at last it did. He made a clean catch of it, but preferred a run to a return kick.

Hugging the ball to him as if it were a very

precious and very breakable baby, he jumped away from the leap of the first cadet tackler, and dug out for the far-off goal. The second tackler he knocked aside with one quick open-handed, straight-from-the-shoulder lunge. Then he was up with his own line, and here—thanks to Tug's especial study of the art of protection, or "interference," as they call it oftener—he ran on unhindered by the Greenvillers, who were bunted and shunted off like waves from a sharp prow. But just as Punk was getting well past the center line and invading Greenville's territory, Nesbitt, their captain, darted around behind Punk's bodyguard, and came down on his back like a grizzly bear. Punk went to ground instant. But he could hear the wild applause of the Lakerim faction of the spectators over his great run.

There was a quick line-up. Sawed-Off snapped the ball back to Jumbo, and he shot it left to Reddy, who dashed toward the right end. All the Lakerims went the same way; and all the Greenvillers rushed over to stop the run. But as Reddy passed his brother he slipped the ball back to him; and before the helpless cadets could stop themselves, they saw Brother scooting unobstructed round the left end, and far down the field. They had n't expected the old "criss-cross" so early in the game, and they were disgusted.

The Greenville full-back was waiting for Heady, however, and he wrapped his arms lovingly about him as if he had come to stay. Heady was pulled down to his knees, but, like every wise player, he tugged and hunched forward for every precious inch he could make before he was held fast.

On the next line-up the goal was only twelve yards away. The Greenvillers expected another end-run, and were not braced for the shock that split their line when the ball went back to the hands of Punk, who came plunging like a tomahawk straight through a suitable hole prepared by Sawed-Off and Bobbles right between the center and the right guard of the enemy.

There was no stopping him for eight yards, and to the complete chagrin of all Greenville the very same man went through the very same place the very same way for four yards more.

When Punk picked himself up he was on the right side of the enemy's goal-line.

The Lakerimmers in the audience could hardly believe that their team had scored a touch-down so soon, and each one of them acted like a grasshopper on a griddle till Punk kicked a perfect goal. Then each one acted like two grasshoppers on a griddle.

Score: Lakerims — 6; Greenvilles — 0.

"They're too easy," said Punk.

"Wait," said Tug.

Nothing succeeds like success, they say; but

The man that caught it was downed by Tug at once, but the first plunge of the Greenvilles bowled Sawed-Off over like a king-pin, and went through the Lakerim line like an elephant, for fifteen yards. It might have been going yet, had not Tug thrown himself flat on his back and helped to pull the whole pile down on himself like a house of cards—though it felt more like almost anything else.

When the Lakerims picked themselves piecemeal out of the scrambled legs, they were as much confused as if they had got the wrong



"LAKERIM SLIPS THROUGH THE CADET INTERFERENCE AND TACKLES LOW AND HARD, BARELY LOSING A MAN OR AN INCH."

sometimes nothing is so demoralizing. The poor Lakerims were so overcome with the change in their condition from defeated and despised villagers to irresistible victors, that they felt as if they were ready to meet the All-America team.

But the blood of the amazed cadets was up now, and when they had the kick-off again, Punk, who was a whit rattled at being suddenly hailed and hugged as a hero, made a fumbling catch, tried for a kick, and punted a sickly one that went up almost straight, and came down in his own territory.

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pieces. The next time Greenville bucked the line they went over like straw men. The third time they simply hung on the cadet rushers as if they were a big turtle, and rode!—rode under their own goal-posts, too, and later saw the ball nicely kicked through for a goal. Score: Greenville — 6; Lakerim — 6.

The next kick-off fell to Tug's men, and it was a miserable fluke. It went barely the necessary ten yards, and fell into the clutch of a cadet who took it on the run and forgot how to stop till he reached Tug's 25-yard line. Here one of the Greenville half-backs returned the

compliment of the criss-cross while the Lakerims looked over their left shoulders like helpless dolts and watched Punk slam him to the ground on the 10-yard line. They lined-up again; just as a formality, it seemed, for they were too polite — or something — to prevent a cadet from cutting through between Sleepy and Sawed-Off for six yards more. Here they managed to gain strength enough from despair to hold Greenville fast for three downs. But when they got the ball, Jumbo was so nervous that he threw it wildly to the all-too-zealous Reddy, who fumbled it and was swept off his feet before he could blurt out "Down!" and shoved back over his own goal-line for a safety. Score: Greenville — 8; Lakerim — 6.

It was a disconsolate lot of Lakerims that hobbled out now to the 25-yard line, and they got little encouragement from the kick-out, which went off on the bias and out of bounds to the left. It was brought back for another try. This time Punk punted it out of bounds to the right. This gave the ball to Greenville again at Lakerim's 25-yard line. After a run past Pretty for eight yards, Tug thought he foresaw a try for a goal from the field, so he made a furious dash for his rival, Captain Nesbitt, who was coolly dropping the ball for his kick; but the cadet opposite Tug, a brawny left tackle, struck him a blinding blow in the face and throttled him. Of course, the umpire did not see this, and Tug simply swallowed the foul in patience. He was above retaliation, and, later, when Sleepy was about to complain of a foul blow given him, Tug silenced him with a blunt "Don't be a cry-baby! Take your punishment and pay it back — after the game, if you want to. Don't risk any foul plays. We can't afford it."

Tug was too much dazed to watch Nesbitt's drop-kick, but he knew from the wild derisive yells of the Greenville rooters — a suggestive word sometimes — that the cadets had scored again.

"Thirteen to six!" he groaned; "that's an unlucky number — for us."

But he went doggedly to his place, muttered a few sharp words to his men, and saw with delight that the kick-off was a good long one. This time the cadet full-back answered with a

long punt. Punk had passed from the stupor of triumph to the stupor of dismal failure, and he brought himself out of this now into a healthy state of cool resolve. He caught the cadet punt fairly, and sent it back with his compliments. The wind was in his favor and helped his inferior strength. But the Greenville man was determined to win the honors of the battle, and there ensued one of the prettiest sights imaginable: a duel between two full-backs, the ball soaring in graceful curves to and fro like a carrier-pigeon, and the twenty anxious men darting here and there beneath. The Greenvilles' captain, seeing that he was rather losing than gaining advantage, ordered his full-back to bring up the ball on a run, and he came tearing in breathlessly.

Just as Sawed-Off fell on him he passed the ball back to Nesbitt, and Nesbitt went down the field like a comet with a Lakerim man for a tail. Jumbo dashed across to head him off — the ant would waylay a camel! He tripped and fell just before he reached his prey, but reached out and clutched Nesbitt's flying ankles and brought the proud captain down with a bloody nose. But the umpire called it a foul, — properly enough, since the tackle was below the knees, — and gave Greenville fifteen yards. This was a hard blow to Tug, but it was nothing to the blow he got when a Greenville "revolving tandem" beat him to the ground and went through him and his men for a touch-down. The touch-down was far to the side, however, and though Nesbitt made a noble effort, the wind carried the ball away from the posts, and he failed of goal. Score: Greenville — 17; Lakerim — 6.

There followed some hard mass-plays on both sides, with little gain to either. And then time was up, for the faculties of the two schools wisely forbade the boys to play more than twenty-five-minute halves.

When the Lakerims gathered at their quarters they were a blue lot. They had no trainers to rub them down with alcohol and tone them up with advice. But Tug arose and waving a towel, instead of a manuscript, made the following oration:

"Men, we have n't done ourselves justice. We can take the starch out of these cadets if

we try hard enough. But you — we — got the big-head after that first touch-down and played like crazy men. Now, all you 've got to do is to be steady and cautious. Don't lose any good chances, but don't take any big risks. And two things we can do, and have got to do. We can hold that line if we do our best, and we can buck it if we do our best. Boys,—er—men,— we 've *got* to win this game, and we 're *going* to win it."

They cheered him gaily, and came back to the struggle, rested, refreshed, and heartened.

This time the kick-off is Lakerim's. The ball shoots like an arrow on a clean long arc.

The Greenvilles are upset by their long lead and do not expect the vim they find in the Lakerim dash. Their full-back is slammed to earth, almost in his tracks, by Tug, who has slashed through interference like a sword. The cadets now try a run round the end, but their runner can go only sidewise and is soon pushed out of bounds. Second down; five yards to gain. A wedge fails to split Tug and B. J. Third down; five yards to gain. A line-up, a snap-back, a toss to the left half-back, Tug is boosted over the shoulders of the crouching left tackle, and slaps the half-back to turf before he can move.

Lakerim's ball. "8-17-33-9!" A wedge between Greenville's left tackle and guard. No gain. Second down, five yards to gain. A different signal for the same wedge on Greenville's left tackle and guard. Third down, five yards to gain. Same wedge, same place. Through the exhausted Greenville men the plow makes a furrow of ten yards.

Line-up again. Tug gives the old signal "8-17-33-9." It sounds familiar. Nesbitt cries, "Brace that left tackle!" but he did not catch a slight difference in Tug's intonation, and has the pleasure of seeing Reddy going like a fire-brand in a cyclone round the unguarded right end.

He is stopped thirty yards from home. Tug sends another wedge into the exhausted left tackle, and says as they pick themselves up some yards further down the field:

"You will throttle me, will you?"

He goes on bucking the line; vainly sometimes; oftener with success, till his stout-hearted

rams have butted their way across the line again, and seen another goal nicely kicked. Score: Greenville — 17; Lakerim — 12.

This success is meat and drink to the Lakerim lads, and when they get the ball after the next kick-off they follow Tug into the line with resistless force, hurling their own bodies like sledge-hammers against their rivals till they have pounded them back again to their twenty-five-yard line.

The ball is lost at times, but not through fumbles; and everywhere Greenville tests the line she finds a wall piled up suddenly there in waves of stone. Lakerim slips through the cadet interference and tackles low and hard, rarely losing a man or an inch. Lakerim's own interference is as hard to pierce as a Greek phalanx.

"Now you 're playing football," says Tug.

Once inside Greenville's 25-yard line, Punk begs for a chance to try a goal from the field, but Tug refuses.

"If you should make it, we 'd only tie the score; and the wind 's against you. No, sir; we 've got 'em on the run, and I would n't give 'em the ball for a thousand dollars!"

There was a long, tough fight in front of that beautiful goal. Once or twice Tug's men lost the ball on downs, but Greenville was afraid to give it up with a kick, and could not break his line; so the ball came back. Many, many were the bruises, and twice there was a pause for an injured player. Both times it was Tug, but he would not be dragged out of the game. He shook off his pain and daze, and always bucked the line; till finally, like a tidal wave, his men broke over the Greenville reef into the lagoon beyond the goal. Punk's toe was true again, and the score was Lakerim 18 — Greenville 17.

The Lakerims were, after all, only half-trained High School boys, and they could not stand everything. So they let up a little, and before long realized that Greenville was awake and desperate now, and that she was backing them toward their own goal, spasmodically but surely. In vain Tug coached and inspired his men. In vain they welled up against Greenville wedges. In vain they tried the Greenville line and the ends of the line. Tug felt that the time-keeper was his only salvation now, and hoped only to

hold Greenville where she was. But back he was forced; back, always back; till finally the goal-posts were just over the heads of the twins.

"Hold hard, boys! We've got to hold 'em," he pleaded; and he whispered to B. J., "I'm going through that line, or die!"

First down—no gain. That's good. Do it again. Second down—three yards gained. Third down—no gain.

If they make that two yards now, Lakerim is done for.

Nesbitt has his men well up. The ball is to go to the full-back for a last assault on the enemy's left; but just as the full-back catches the leathern prize, there is a rip and a swish and a swoop, and Tug is through the line and on him, the dumfounded cadet has fallen over backward and dropped the ball, Tug has shot past and scooped it up, and is off for the far-away, far-away goal! He is all out of breath; but there is no one in front of him, and he gasps and runs like a hunted animal. There is a wild mob after him, and his heart acts as if it would bounce out of his mouth, and his parched lungs feel that all the air is withdrawn from the world; but still he runs, and finally when everything has grown dazzlingly, blindingly scarlet before him, he bumps into something hard, and knows it is a goal-post, and drops to the ground stunned, gasping, utterly

(To be continued.)

beaten out. And he is crying a little, perhaps; but heroes can afford to cry.

Of course Punk could n't miss the goal after that, and time was up that minute; so the score stood, 24 to 17.

There is no use telling anything more about the blissful crowd that went back to Lakerim, the fireworks, and all that.

When the team was riding home that night, in moonlight as pure as their own happiness, every boy had an arm or two around some other boy.

Again Bobbles piped up: "If we only had a gymnasium, and a field and colors—"

"And the earth with a fence around it," grunted Sawed-Off.

But Bobbles went on: "Now, I've been thinking—"

"You'll hurt yourself some of these days," said Jumbo.

"I've been thinking," Bobbles persisted, "of a way we can get all these things. My scheme is this: We made \$44.50 as our share of the gate receipts. Well, now, we'll salt that away and—"

"Lakerim! All out!" called the driver of their omnibus.

"I'll tell you about it later," said Bobbles, as eleven tired sleepyheads separated to go home to their well-earned pillows and sweet dreams of victory.

FOR "SPECIAL DELIVERY."

BY MINNIE L. UPTON.

"T WAS a dainty pink epistle in the bottom of the box

(The mail-box on the corner where resides Miss Polly Knox);

And it turned and "wriggle-twisted" to get nearer to the top,

While more letters kept a-dropping, till it thought they'd never stop.

"Oh, please wait a bit," it chirruped; "for I really *must* have air;

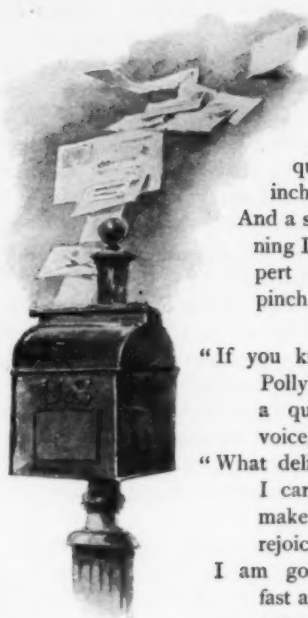
And to elbow one so little does n't seem exactly fair,

Though I'm sure you do not mean it as a rudeness; I'd be pleased

If you'd boost me up a little where I would n't be so squeezed."

But the big, bluff Business Letter and the U. S. Document,

And the Postal Cards prosaic, said they did n't "care one cent";



That they
would
not
"budge
a frac-
tion of a
quarter of an
inch!"
And a spiteful Dun-
ning Letter gave a
pert and painful
pinch.

"If you knew," piped
Polly's letter, with
a quaver in its
voice,
"What delightful news
I carry it would
make your hearts
rejoice!
I am going, just as
fast as Uncle Sam
can carry me,

To invite Louisa Jenkins to a charming Polly
Tea.

"Now this poor Louisa Jenkins seldom has
one bit of fun;
And my dearest Mistress Polly (who is like
a little sun,
With her face so bright and beaming)
wants to cheer her up, you see,
And has sent the invitation (and I 'm
proud of it!) by me.

"There will be three kinds of ice-
cream, angel-cake, and maca-
roons
(You should see our Polly's tea-set
with the pretty silver spoons!);
Lemonade, and pinks and roses, dolls
and strawberries and cream!
(Wish that I could only be there, just
to see Louisa beam!)"

Then the big, bluff Business Letter said,
"You voice my sentiments";
And the spiteful Dunning Letter beamed
with bland benevolence;
And all joined unanimously with the U. S.
Document
In declaring 't was essential such a letter
should be sent
On its way with special honors, and arrive
in tip-top style;
And each Postal Card beamed broadly,
with a thin, but cheerful smile.

Then they helped the Little Letter to an
airy upper station,
And treated it, as it deserved, with marked
consideration,
And formed its body-guard until it reached
its destination.



TWO BIDDICUT BOYS, (*And their Adventures with a Wonderful Trick Dog.*)

By J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

I. ON THE LAKE-SHORE.

THE boys were putting on their clothes in the shadow of the ice-house, when a young man, walking along the edge of the railroad embankment, sauntered down to the shore, followed by a dog. The man had on a narrow-brimmed, speckled straw hat, and a loose sack-coat, and he carried a short stick jauntily in his hand.

He did n't seem to observe the boys, but the boys observed him.

"Looks like a lightning-rod man off on a vacation," said Cliff Chantry. "The one that rodded our new barn had just such a free and easy, I-own-the-earth sort of swagger."

"Bright-looking cur he 's got," said Ike Ingalls, tugging at a stocking half-way on his wet foot.

"It 's an Irish terrier," said Dick Swan, hopping on one foot to jar the water out of his ear.

"That 's no terrier," said the tallest of the boys, as he stood buttoning his shirt-collar, with his elbows spread, his chin up, and a prominent nose high in the air. "It 's some sort of a spaniel; don't you see the ears?"—lowering his chin and glancing in the direction of the dog and his master. "His legs are too long for any Irish terrier's."

"A spaniel it is, then; when Quint Whistler says a thing, that makes it so!"

Having uttered this sarcasm, Dick hopped on the other foot, to jounce the water out of his other ear.

Quint paid no attention to the taunt, but pulled down his wristbands under his coat-cuffs, and remarked dryly:

"What 's that he has in his hand?—I mean the man, not the dog. It 's too big for a toothpick, but not big enough for a walking-stick."

"I 'll tell you," suggested Cliff Chantry. "He 's the leader of a band, and that 's his band-stick. Don't you know?"—and he stopped combing his wet hair with his fingers to make fantastic motions with an imaginary baton. "He 's waving it now. See?"

"The dog 's his band. He 's waving it for him," said Quint. "There!"

The stick went splashing into the water a few rods from shore, and the dog went plunging and paddling after it.

"I knew he was a water-dog," said Quint.

"That 's no sign," Cliff replied. "A terrier could do that. I 'll ask him. I say, mister, what sort of a whelp is that?"

The young man waited until the dog brought him the stick, then turned to the boys coming down the slope and buttoning their last buttons.

"What sort of a whelp?" he repeated. "He 's a sparkler. Did n't you ever see a sparkler?"

"Can't say I ever did," Cliff replied. "Never heard of one. What 's a sparkler like?"

"As much like the animal you see here as your two thumbs are like each other. See him, and you see a sparkler. Hear him,"—at a motion of the stick the dog barked,—and you hear a sparkler. Did you ever read Shakspeare?"

"I know the dialogue between Brutus and Cassius, in the 'Advanced Speaker,'" Cliff replied. "I acted Cassius once, at a school exhibition, to this fellow's Brutus." He turned, and with a smile looked up at Quint Whistler, who was the last to come down to the shore, buttoning his vest by the way.

"Brutus—Marcus Brutus—this slab-sided chap with the gambrel-roof nose?" cried the dog's owner, with a laugh which infected the whole crowd of boys, except Quint himself.

He had, as has been suggested, an exceptionally bold nasal protuberance; and there was a break in the high slope of it, somewhat suggestive of the roof in question. Cliff's nose, on the contrary, was short, but shapely, belonging to a frank, freckled, mirthful face—the face of a farmer's boy about sixteen years old. He was of medium height, and rather stocky. Quint was perhaps a year older, fully a head taller, lank of face and bony of frame. His countenance was grave almost to sternness at this moment, as if he did not altogether relish the personal nature of the young man's remarks.

The young man confronted the two, looking from one to the other, with an air of lively satisfaction at having made their acquaintance. The boys' companions, half a dozen or more, gathered about them in a group, to listen to the conversation.

"Brutus has got the most nose, but Cassius knows the most," the stranger rattled on gaily. "Though it's easier to decide about the nose than about the knowledge. If I could see you two act Brutus and Cassius, that might help settle the question."

Quint kept his frowning countenance, but Cliff answered laughingly:

"He's great as Brutus! You should see him once! He used to step up on the teacher's platform to spout, 'When Marcus Brutus grows so covetous'; then when he got to,— 'Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts! dash him to pieces!'—he would jump down on the floor with a jar that made the old school-house shake. Cassius was nowhere! But what has Shakspeare, and Brutus and Cassius, to do with your pup?"

"That's what I was coming to," replied the pup's master, holding the stick again, ready to throw. "In one of the plays is a heroine, 'created,' as her lover says, 'of every creature's best.' That can't always be true. But it applies exactly to my dog. He is *multum in parvo*, *e pluribus unum, ne plus ultra*. He's a land-dog and a water-dog, a sheep-dog and a watch-dog; as honest a dog as ever you saw steal a sausage, and the cunningest trick-dog in the wide world; as sly as a fox, and as amusing as a monkey. Sparkler's his name, and Spark-

ler's his nature. Young gentlemen, that paragon is for sale, and I invite you to make an offer for him."

He threw the stick, and as the "paragon" went splashing after it, he added:

"What 'll you give, Brutus? Name a figure, Cassius? Don't be bashful because I happen to be a stranger."

"I should n't think you would want to sell such a perfect creature as that," remarked Cliff Chantry.

"My young friend, you're right. Nothing but dire necessity could ever induce me to part with him. Necessity is a hard mistress; she'll part a good boy and his gran'ma, often a man and his money, sometimes a man and his dog. Have you a silver half-dollar, Brutus? You, Cassius, a quarter? I'd like to flip it into the lake, for you to see him paddle out and find it—dive to the bottom for it, and bring it ashore. Anybody got a piece of bright money?"

Brutus lifted his eyebrows at Cassius with a droll expression. Cassius drew down one side of his face with a sagacious wink. The other boys likewise winked and smiled, and two or three of them might have been observed to press their hands prudently on their pockets. Bright pieces with which to strew the bottom of the lake were not forthcoming.

"I am pained to perceive an air of incredulity among some of you," said the stranger. "But to convince you—" He put his hand into his own pocket, and asked, "How deep is it out where he is now?"

"About up to your neck," said Cliff.

"That's all right. This is the last quarter that remains to me out of a small fortune; but to show you the confidence I have in the sagacity of my four-footed friend—Here, Sparkler!"

Sparkler dropped the stick on the sand, put his nose to the coin, and yelped wishfully.

"Watch carefully!" his owner said to the boys. "Look alive, Sparkler!" And he tossed the coin boldly out into the lake, where it sank in a circle of ripples.

The dog swam swiftly after it, put down his head into the clear water two or three times as he neared the spot, and finally went down altogether. He seemed to be gone a long

while: a few seconds seem a long while when you are watching a feat of that sort.

"I bet you he does n't bring up any silver quarter," said Cliff Chantry.

"How much will you bet?" cried the dog's owner eagerly. "Any fellow here wants to make a bet? You, Brutus? Put up some money, some of you!"

"But you 've no money to put up," said Quint Whistler.

"I 've that quarter —"

"At the bottom of the lake!" Cliff laughed excitedly.

"I 'll bet the dog! The dog against a dollar! That 's a hundred to one! Quick!" cried the young man. "There he comes! Will you take the wager, on what he 's got in his mouth?"

"I 'm not in the habit of backing up my opinions with bets," remarked Quint Whistler. "All I can say is, I 'm glad 't was n't my quarter you flung."

"He 's got his mouth shut," said Ike Ingalls. "It was open when he swam out."

"He 's got a pebble in it! He 's got his mouth full of sand! Ho, ho!" The boys clamored and jeered, at the same time watching with eager curiosity the dog paddling shoreward.

"Boys," said the young man, gaily, "you are a squad of young Solomons! You 'll sprout wisdom when you get free from your mothers' apron-strings! Is n't that so, Sparkler?" — as the dog came dripping out of the lake, and dropped into his master's open palm, along with some gravel, before the eyes of the intensely interested spectators, the recovered piece of money!

II.

A ROMANTIC STORY.

"THAT 's nothing to what he can do," said the young man, dipping the coin in the water and then wiping it with his handkerchief before returning it to his pocket. "Shake yourself, Sparkler!"

Sparkler shook himself, sending a shower of spray into the faces of the recoiling and backward tumbling boys. Quint Whistler alone stood his ground, receiving the drops on his

nose with an equanimity that amused the stranger.

"Now I see what that gambrel-roof is for — to shed water! My object, young gentlemen, was not to get the water on to you, as you may perhaps imagine, but to get it off from Sparkler, and reduce his weight by so much liquid; for now I am going to show you how he can jump. Sparkler!"

The young man held out the stick horizontally, about eighteen inches from the ground, and the dog leaped over it. He raised it six inches, and the dog went over it again. So he kept raising it, and the dog continued to jump over it, until it was finally placed across the top of Ike Ingalls's head.

Ike shut his eyes, giggling nervously, and holding himself still, while the dog, just touching his shoulder lightly, went over the stick, and came down on the grass beyond.

"He 's a regular trick-dog," said the stranger. "Now let me suggest a scheme. Brutus and Cassius will buy him for twenty-five dollars, and star the country with him. See? Play Shakspeare and exhibit the dog! Can Mr. Whistler whistle?" He had heard the boys call Quint by his full name. "Can either of you sing a comic song? If you can, your fortune is made!"

"I can whistle," said Quint, "like an empty jug. And we can both sing like a couple of cats on a back shed at two o'clock in the morning. But I 'm afraid that sort of whistling and singing would n't be popular, let alone our Shakspeare!" Everybody laughed, except Quint himself, who looked up with an appearance of mild surprise, as if to see where the fun came in.

"The dog alone will be attraction enough," said the stranger. "See what else he can do." He took off his coat and laid it on the grass. "Watch it, Sparkler!"

The dog lay down beside it, with his paws on the collar.

"Now, would any of you young gentlemen like to earn a quarter? If so, bring away that coat, and the lucre is yours."

"I don't care for the quarter, but I can get that coat," said Dick Swan, stepping carefully toward it, undeterred by the growls of Sparkler.

All watched with excited interest till he made

a sudden snatch at it. But before his hand grasped the garment, Sparkler's teeth were fast in his sleeve—so fast, indeed, that as he sprang back he left a piece of his cuff in the dog's mouth, amidst the loud laughter of his companions.

"He can do a hundred things," said the stranger. "Here 's one."

And without hesitation the dog picked it up and brought it to him.

"Now, Brutus, what will you have?"

"I say the thing that 's under the hat," Quint replied.

"Very well; the money that 's under the hat," said the master. Whereupon Sparkler tipped the hat over with his nose, nipped daintily at the



"SPARKLER'S" FIRST APPEARANCE.

Beside his coat on the grass he placed his handkerchief; beside that he laid his stick, and near that the silver quarter; then over the quarter he turned his hat.

"Now, boys," he said stepping back a few paces, "which of those articles shall he bring to me?"

"The handkerchief," said Cliff.

"You hear, Sparkler," said the master; "the handkerchief."

coin, which, together with some grass, he took up and dropped into the young man's extended hand.

"That 's judgmatical!" said Quint.

And Cliff exclaimed, "He 's great! Why don't you exhibit him yourself?"

"That 's what I am doing at this moment," said the dog's owner; "and that 's what I 've done to hundreds of delighted spectators.

Sparkler never fails to sparkle. But to pass around the hat—that's another question. If I've a weak point, it's my modesty."

"Your modesty is as plain as a gambrel-roof nose," said Quint Whistler solemnly.

"Brutus," said the young man, laughing good-naturedly with the rest, "we're even. You owed me one, and you have paid it." He put on his coat, and proceeded: "I am the son of a distinguished lawyer, lately deceased; and I am now on my way to the bedside of a sick mother in Michigan, who has sent for me, without knowing that I have no money for the journey."

Cliff fondled the dog's wet head, and inquired: "How do you happen to be out of money so far from home?"

The young man pulled down his cuffs under his coat-sleeves, and smilingly answered:

"That's a long story; but it can be briefly told. I was employed as clerk in the big hotel in Bennington—the Stark Hotel, which was burnt two weeks ago. What? you did n't hear of that big fire? Well, you *would* have heard of it if you had been in town that night. 'T was a clean sweep! The guests lost about everything—barely escaped with their lives. I was so busy getting out the hotel books, and helping the women and children, that I could not give any time to my own personal effects; so I lost all my clothing, except what I had on my back, and all my books and private papers. I had some money in my pocket, but I've spent that waiting to get my back salary from the proprietor. He owes me seven hundred dollars; but I could n't get it, because he had n't settled with the insurance companies. I was lucky in one thing—I saved my dog. I threw him from a three-story window."

"Seems to me that's a three-story kind of a story," observed Quint.

"Wait till I tell you," said the young man, not at all disconcerted. "That was twelve o'clock at night. Think of it! He saw I was in danger—would stick to my heels, you know, while I was rousing the guests; he really helped me, by barking up and down the corridors, till I tumbled a feather-bed out of a window, and dropped him on it."

"I don't see how you *can* part with him!"

Cliff exclaimed, caressing the wonderful quadruped.

"Necessity—sheer necessity!" answered the young man. "To be perfectly frank with you, I shall sell him conditionally, if at all,—with the privilege of buying him back, at double the price, any time within three months. Give me twenty-five dollars for him, and if I don't pay you fifty within ninety days, the dog is yours. I'm willing to put that in writing."

"I have n't got twenty-five dollars in the world," said Cliff, his eyes glistening with excitement as he looked appealingly at his companions. "And I know I could n't raise so much."

"How much can you raise?"

"I don't know."

Cliff walked aside with Quint, two or three others following.

"You don't really think of buying him, do you?" said Ike Ingalls.

"I would, in a minute, if I could," said Cliff. "He's just wonderful! Say, Quint! what do you say to going in with me?"

"I'm afraid 't would n't work well for two boys to own one dog," replied Quint. "But I should like to see you own him; and I'll lend you a little money, if you like."

"Will you?" said Cliff eagerly.

"Yes, but let me give you something else first: that's advice. You are worked up now. You are more excitable than I am. You'd better wait till you've had time to think it over and ask your folks. You want to do a thing like this when your head is cool."

"My head is cool enough," said Cliff. "But, cool or hot, I want that dog! As for my folks, I know they would n't consent if I should ask them. But if I take him home, show his tricks, and let out by degrees that I've bought him conditionally, to double my money when the owner comes for him,—if he ever does come: I shall hope he won't!—I don't think they'll say much."

"Well, you know best about it," said Quint. "I've got four or five dollars at home I can let you have."

"I can lend you three dollars," Ike Ingalls whispered, eager to see the sale go on.

Dick Swan, likewise interested in seeing so

wonderful a dog brought into the neighborhood, offered to advance two more.

"Now, don't you appear too anxious!" Quint warned his enthusiastic friend.

"Oh, no!" said Cliff, with flushed cheeks and suffused eyes. "I'm as cool as a cucumber in an ice-house!"

III.

THE STRANGER AND HIS DOG PART COMPANY.

WHEN the friends went back to where the dog was, they found him sitting up in a comical attitude, with his fore paws pointing at the handkerchief thrown over the top of the stick, which was stuck in the turf.

"He feels a little chilly after his bath, and he is warming his hands," his master explained. "You may think it's rather a cold fire; but that's nothing to a dog that has a little imagination. Don't burn your fingers, Sparkler!"

The dog actually drew his paws back a little, showing his teeth and winking with his pleasant brown eyes, as if he enjoyed the humor of the situation.

"That will do. Now put out the fire."

The dog pulled the handkerchief from the stick, and put his paws upon it.

"You see what he is," cried the owner, turning to Cliff. "What do you say?"

Cliff was more than ever determined to possess so marvelous a creature. But keeping in mind his friend's caution, and remembering how he had seen shrewd jockeys swap horses, he assumed an indifferent air, and answered diplomatically:

"I can't raise the money; I told you before."

"How did you come by the dog?" Quint inquired.

"That's a part of the story I believe I did n't tell," replied the young man. "He was a puppy one of the hostlers had in the hotel stables. I saw there was good stuff in him, bought him for a six-bladed jack-knife with a corkscrew and a gimlet, and gave my leisure time to training him."

Quint stooped to look at the dog's collar, and remarked that it bore no name or number.

"Has he ever been licensed?" he inquired.

"Licensed? yes," said the young man, with a smile of amusement at the simplicity of the question. "But in country places, where every dog is known, the law requiring names and license numbers on dogs' collars is apt to be a dead letter." He turned to Cliff. "How much can you raise?"

"I can raise five dollars; I'll give that for the dog," said Cliff, with a composed expression, such as he had noticed on the faces of horse-traders, but with a wildly throbbing heart.

The owner regarded him with a sad and pitying smile.

"I gave you credit for being a well-intentioned young man," he said; "and I supposed any one who had ever taken the great part of Cassius would have too high an appreciation of good acting to make such an offer for such a performer as my dog Sparkler. Why, sir, it would make him blush, it would make him hang his head for shame, to be sold for a paltry sum like that!"

It certainly made Cliff ashamed to have the pettiness of his offer held up to contempt in this way, and he would have blushed if his face had not been so very red before. He murmured something about having no more money.

"But your friends will lend you some; I see it in their eyes. Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. I believe you'll be a kind master; and I saw when you were stroking him that he had taken a liking to you. He knows a good dog-lover when he sees one, and he picked you out of the crowd. Give me twenty dollars, and the privilege of buying him back at forty, and he's yours."

"I'll give you ten," said Cliff quickly.

"That's all I will give."

The other boys looked eagerly from his face to that of the young man, in which they saw signs of relenting. As Cliff could n't be moved to raise his offer, the owner finally said:

"And I hold the right to buy him back?"

"Yes," replied Cliff, "at double the price."

The young man laughed, and shrugged.

"On the whole," he said, "I think that will be as well for me. I shall save money when I come to reclaim him; and the ten dollars will take me as far as Buffalo, where I have friends who will help me over the rest of the journey. I

would n't have sold him outright if you had offered a hundred."

He took a small cord from his pocket, which he made fast to the dog's collar.

"This is hardly necessary," he observed; "for if I tell him to go with you he will go.

But it will be safer to place him under some restraint until I get well out of the way. I shall hurry down to the Junction, and take the first west-bound train." He stood ready to put the loose end of the cord into Cliff's hand. "Now where 's your ten dollars, young man?"

"These boys are going to get it for me," said Cliff; "they live nearer here than I do. You 'll give me a bill of sale?"

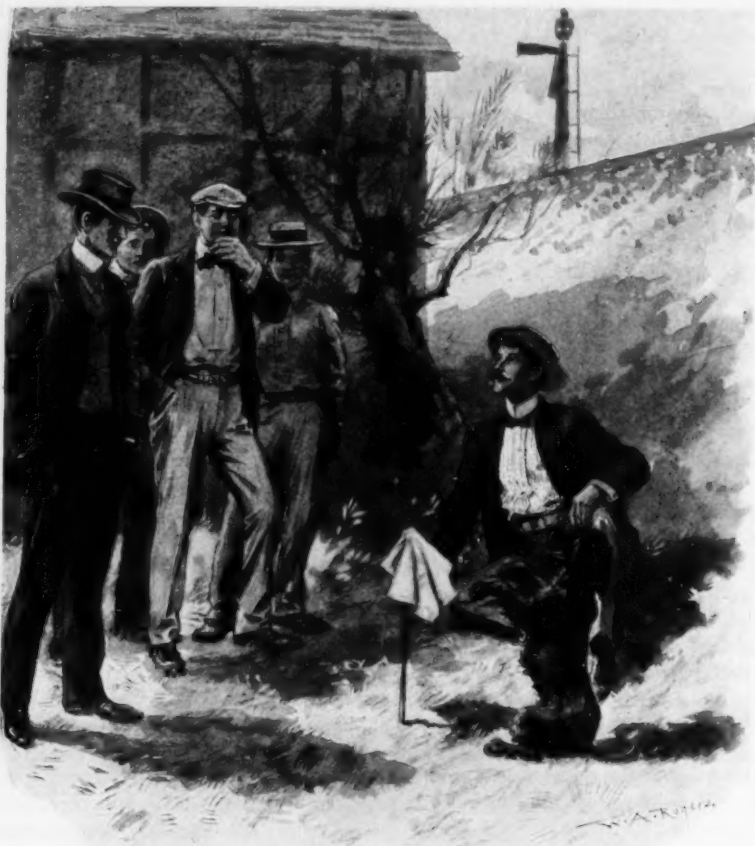
"Certainly, if you require it. Hurry up, and I 'll wait here."

Some of the boys went off with Cliff and

Quint, while the rest remained in the delightful company of the performing dog and his master. In a short time those who had departed came running back, Cliff at their head and Quint lagging in the rear; and Cliff, out of breath, paid with trembling hands his borrowed money.

He received in return the end of the cord, and a leaf torn from the stranger's note-book. On this was penciled a memorandum of the transaction, signed "A. K. Winslow."

"My usual signature," said the dog's late owner. "Though I may as well tell you that



"THEY FOUND SPARKLER SITTING UP IN A COMICAL ATTITUDE, WITH HIS FORE PAWS POINTING AT THE HANDKERCHIEF."

the A. stands for Algernon and the K. for Knight, and that my address will be Battle Creek, Michigan, till further notice. That is your receipted bill, with the redemption clause inserted. Now here is something for you to sign for my protection."

He held out his open note-book, in which Cliff read, on a penciled page:

"Purchased of A. K. Winslow, for ten dollars (\$10), his trick-dog Sparkler, which I agree to re-deliver to him, or to his order, on the payment of twice that sum (\$20), any time within three months."

This, like the bill of sale, was duly dated; and Cliff, after consulting with Quint, who thought it "judgmatical," attached his signature.

"I keep this, you keep that, and these friends of yours are our witnesses," said Algernon Knight Winslow, in the best of spirits, notwithstanding the present necessity of parting from his four-footed companion. "Sparkler! look alive!"

The dog sat up, with fore legs lifted and paws drooping, while his late master addressed him, with one forefinger pointed impressively:

"Sparkler, sharer of my fortunes, will you go with this young gentleman who holds you by the cord, stay with him faithfully, serve him obediently, and perform tricks for him as you would for me, till I send or come myself to claim you? Answer!"

Sparkler regarded him with half-closed, sleepy-looking eyes, and dropped one paw.

"That means 'yes,'" said Algernon K. Winslow. "And now you have him."

"You don't mean to say he takes in all you've been saying?" Cliff queried wonderingly.

"He takes in the gist of it as well as any of you. Now, with regard to his tricks." And Mr. Winslow went on to give Cliff some useful hints on that all-important subject.

The dog was never to be whipped under any circumstances, but always to be treated kindly, and rewarded with nice bits from the table after each performance.

"And I advise you to feed him as soon as you get home; for he has been on rather short allowance lately. Now, good-by. Farewell! Adieu! Au revoir! Till we meet again!" cried A. K. Winslow gaily.

Cliff had still some questions to ask regarding the tricks, which being obligingly answered, he said, "Come, Sparkler!" and set off, cord in hand, accompanied by the dog, who went as readily as if he had been acting one of his well-understood parts. Cliff was overjoyed; and his friends, running beside him and the leashed

animal, were almost as jubilant as he. Next to owning a trick-dog is the pleasure of having a friend own one.

"By-by!" Algernon K. Winslow called after them, waving his hand, as he turned and walked smilingly away.

IV.

CLIFF BRINGS HOME HIS PURCHASE.

"LAND's sake alive! What 's up?" exclaimed Mrs. Chantry, looking from the window of the old Chantry farm-house, and seeing a rabble of boys, headed by her son Clifford leading a strange dog, turn in at the gate.

On their way through the village the original party of six or seven had been joined by other boys eager to hear about the dog; and now two more, younger brothers of Cliff, ran out from the barn to meet the astonishing procession.

"What you got there? Where 'd you get that dog?" cried the younger brothers, aged twelve and ten, almost with one voice.

"Bought him!" replied Cliff, walking proudly in, followed by his rabble.

"Where? What did you give? What 's he good for?" clamored the younger brothers, falling into the ranks.

"He 's a trick-dog, and he 's worth a hundred dollars!" replied Sparkler's new owner. "Say, just keep quiet, and let me get him tied up in the wood-house, before you scare him to death. I'll tell you all about it in a minute, ma!" he cried, passing on to the rear of the house, regardless of his mother's expostulations.

She intercepted him at the back door.

"Tell me now! Stop right where you are!" she commanded him. "Have you been buying a dog without permission from your father or me?"

"I did n't have time to get permission; 't would n't do to let such a chance slip. He 's just the knowingest dog you ever saw or heard of! You and pa will both say it 's all right when I tell you," said Cliff, leading his prize and his mob of boys into the wood-shed, a barn-like addition to the house, with one large door opening into the back yard, and a smaller one within, communicating with the kitchen.

"The boy 's out of his head!" Mrs. Chantry exclaimed. "I should think they had all broken out of bedlam! Amos and Trafton have

run wild with the rest. Where are *you* going, Susie?"

"I want to see the dog," said Susie, a fourteen-year-old sister of Cliff's.

"I declare, you 're crazy too! Did n't anybody ever see a dog before?" cried the mother impatiently, but not ill-naturedly, for she was one of the indulgent sort. "Run and find your father, and tell him if he does n't want his wood-house turned into a pandemonium, he 'd better come quick!"

Having got Sparkler into the wood-shed, and fastened him by his cord to the leg of a grindstone, Cliff told his brothers they might "just stroke his ears a little," but not to "fool with him," and charged Quint Whistler to look out for the other boys, who were crowding around; then he went bustling into the kitchen, calling out, "What can I feed him? Say, ma, what can I give my dog to eat?"

"That 's a strange how-d'e-do!" Mrs. Chantry exclaimed; "before you 've told me what dog it is, or how you came by him! As if I was your servant, to feed any stray creetur' you choose to bring into the house!"

"He is n't a stray creetur'!" cried Cliff, "and I don't ask you to feed him; I 'll do that myself. The man I had him of said cold chicken was particularly nice for him."

He was already on his way to the cellar, where the cold victuals were kept.

Having relieved her feelings by scolding him for his folly, his mother helped him prepare a bountiful repast for Sparkler. She even showed her interest in his strange purchase so far as to go and stand in the doorway that opened from the kitchen into the wood-shed, and see the "stray creetur'" fed.

There she was found by Susie, returning from the errand to her father.

"You are not going to be crazy too, are you, ma?" said the girl mischievously.

The good woman's countenance, which she endeavored to keep severe, beamed with kindness and curiosity.

"Law, no, child!" she said; "but I want to see that good victuals ain't wasted. I don't wonder you are surprised, father!"

"Father" was the father of the children, a sturdy, red-faced farmer, with a shaven chin

hedged by long side-whiskers, who had just appeared at the outer door of the wood-shed. This door had been shut to prevent the possible escape of the dog; but he opened it to the width of his broad shoulders, and looked in with a scowl of humorous amazement.

"What 's all this?" he demanded. "I should think Barnum's 'Greatest Show on Earth' had settled itself on my premises!" Over the heads of the smaller boys he saw tall Quint Whistler standing by the grindstone, keeping back the crowd while the dog ate. "That your dog, Quint?"

"No; I don't own so much as a wag of his tail! Wish I did!" said Quint.

"He 's got a mortgage on him; so have I," said Ike Ingalls. "He 's a trick-dog, and a wonder!"

Just then Cliff got up from the floor.

"He 's my dog," he said, turning only the side of his flushed face toward the outer door, without venturing to look at his father. "He 's been trained to do almost anything. There 's no end to the tricks that he can perform. And he 's a good watch-dog,—look at Dick's coat-sleeve! He got that trying to pull a coat away from him after he had been told to guard it."

The mouth between the long side-whiskers worked with grim humor, and said sarcastically:

"There seems to be another thing he can do pretty well—dispose of a plate of victuals! Did you pick him up in the street?"

"No, I did n't; you can't pick up such dogs as this in the street, nor anywhere else," Cliff replied with spirit.

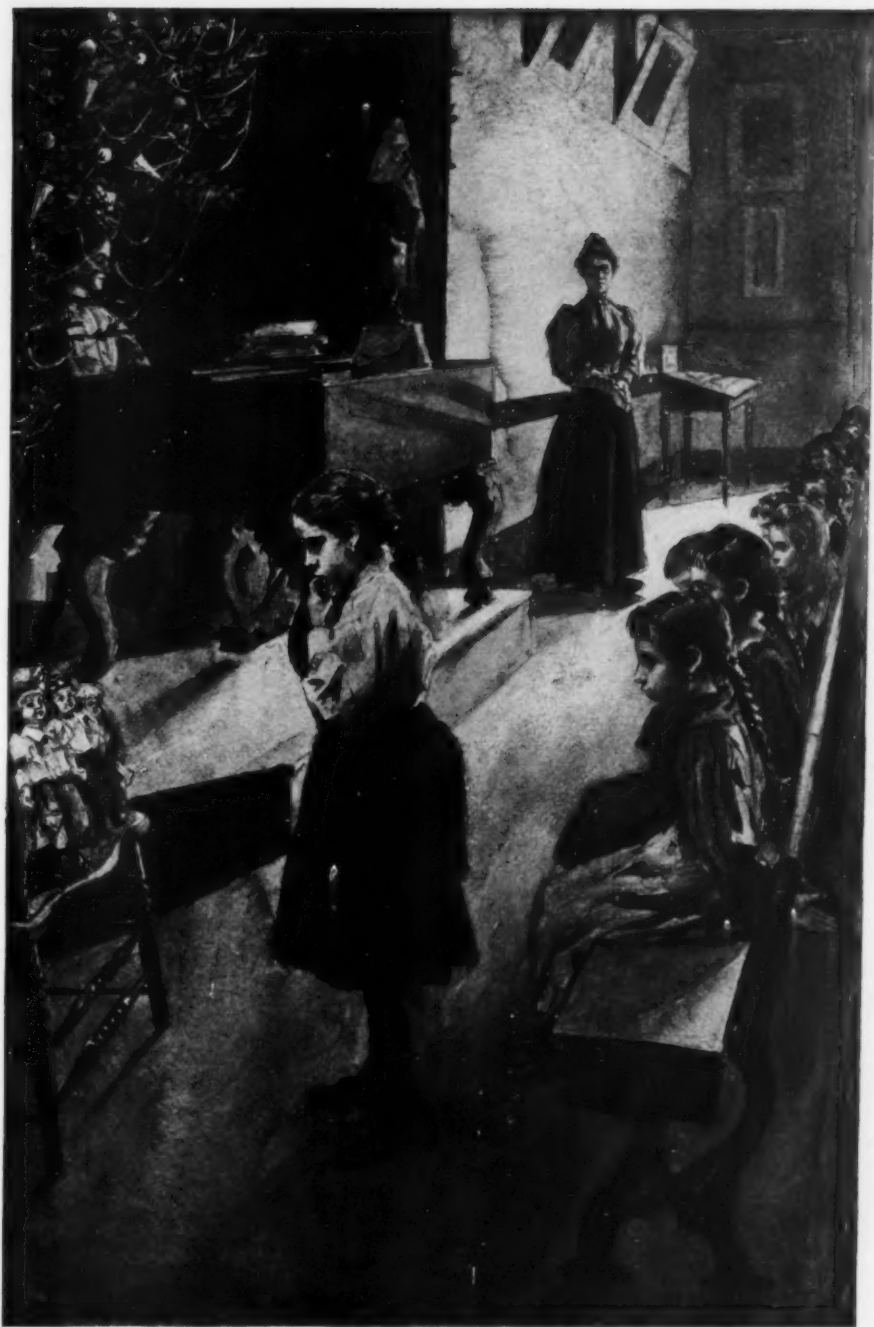
"He bought him," spoke up his younger brother Amos, his face in a broad grin.

All eyes turned again to the father in the doorway, who gave a pull at the fleece of his left whisker, and exclaimed:

"You did n't pay money for a mangy cur like that, I hope!"

"He is n't a mangy cur!" Cliff declared indignantly. He did n't know just what "mangy" meant, but inferred that it must be something discreditable. "He 's just as nice as he can be. Here, ma, take the plate. He has licked it clean of everything but the cold potato. Now stand a little further off, boys, and I 'll show you his tricks."

(To be continued.)



DISTRIBUTION OF CHRISTMAS PRESENTS AT A CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY SCHOOL.

"WHICH ONE SHALL I TAKE?" (SEE PAGE 173.)



SNOW DAYS.

"CLEAR THE TRACK FOR THE DOUBLE-RUNNER!"

SNOW DAYS.

OH, the children love the snow, and they
never grumble over it!
Old Winter snaps, but in their wraps they
toss and tumble over it.
In a laughing, jolly jumble,
Through a snow-drift first they stumble;
Then a snow-man, like a dough-man
(Though he really looks like no man),
They freeze stiff as any Roman,
Ere he has a chance to crumble.
So, hallo! who loves the snow,
Let him out a-playing go!

On the road it makes a cushion so the
wheels can't rattle over it;
But all the girls in merry whirls they romp
and battle over it;
Then the boys, with many a tumble,
Climb the hill without a grumble.
"Ho, for coasting!" Upward posting,
Every one of speed a-boasting,
Down the slope they all go coasting,
With a jounce and bounce and tumble.
So, hallo! who loves the snow,
Let him out a-playing go!

Martha Burr Banks.

WITH THE BLACK PRINCE.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

[*Began in the November number.*]

CHAPTER II.

THE SEA-FIGHT.

"THOU art no seaman!" laughed the prince.
"I think thou wouldst learn to love the sea, as
do all true English hearts. Go thou on board
forthwith. The admiral has given thee one
Piers Fleming for thy shipmaster."

Profoundly respectful was the answer of Richard Neville, for his friend was also his prince and his commander; he said, "'T is but a brief passage, and there will be no fighting."

"Count not on that," replied the prince.
"We are warned of many French rovers, from Calais and elsewhere, on the watch for stragglers. Word comes that the king is safely at La Hogue, in Normandy, and not, as some think, in Guienne. There will soon be enough of fighting on land, but watch thou for a chance to gain honor on the sea. We must win our spurs before we return to Merry England."

The two young men, neither of them yet eighteen, were standing on the height above Portsmouth, gazing down upon the harbor and

out upon the sea. In all directions there were swarms of vessels of all sizes, sailing or at anchor; for it was said that King Edward the Third had gathered over a thousand ships to convey his army across the Channel for his quarrel with Philip of France.

It was the largest English fleet yet assembled, and the army going on board was also the best with which any English king had ever put to sea. It consisted of picked men only. Of these four thousand were men-at-arms, six thousand were Irish, twelve thousand were Welsh; but the most carefully trained and disciplined part of the force consisted of ten thousand bowmen. During a whole year had Edward and his son and his generals toiled to select and prepare the men and the weapons with which they were to meet the highly famed chivalry of the Continent. An army selected from a nation of, perhaps four millions of people was to contend with an army collected from France with her twenty millions, and from such allies of hers as Germany and Bohemia, reinforced by large numbers of paid mercenaries. Among these latter were the crossbowmen of Genoa sold to Philip by the

masters of that Italian oligarchy. Edward's adventure had a seeming of great rashness, for already it was reported that the French king had mustered a hundred thousand men. Full many a gallant cavalier in armor of proof may well have wondered to hear, moreover, that Edward the Third, accounted the foremost general of his time, proposed to meet superior numbers of the best lances of Europe with lightly armored men on foot. They knew not yet of the new era that was dawning upon the science of war. Edward and his bowmen were to teach the world more than one new lesson before that memorable campaign was over. Before this, he had shown what deeds might be wrought upon the sea by ships prepared and manned and led by himself. He had so crippled the naval power of his enemies that there was now no hostile fleet strong enough to prevent his present undertaking, although Philip had managed to send out some scores of cruisers to do whatever harm they could.

The prince was clad in a full suit of the plain black armor from which his popular name had been given him. His vizor was up, and his resolute, intelligent face wore a dignity beyond his years.

The stature of the young hero of England was nearly that of full-grown manhood; and if Richard was not quite so tall, he was both older and stronger than when he had faced the Club of Devon in the village street of Wartmont.

A brilliant company of men-at-arms stood around them, many of whom were famous knights and mighty barons. Richard was now receiving his final instructions, and in a few minutes more he bowed low and departed.

Half-way down the hill he was awaited by a party of stalwart-looking men; and to one of these he said:

"Haste thee now, Guy the Bow. Let us have the sails up and get out of the harbor. Almost the entire army is already on board."

"Ay, my lord," responded the bowman; "I have been all over our ship. The sailors are good men and true; but I like not the captain, and we shall be crowded like sheep in a pen."

"T is but for a day," said Richard; "and the weather is good. We are warned of foes by the way."

"We shall be ready for them," said Guy; then he added, "A page from my lord the Earl of Warwick brought this."

It was a letter, and quickly it came open.

"It is from my mother! The saints be with her!" exclaimed Richard. "She is well. I will read it fully after we are on board. Thanks to the good earl."

Down the hill they went together, and on to a long pier, at the outer end of which was moored a two-masted vessel apparently of about four hundred tons' burden—a large vessel for those days, very high at bow and stern, but low amidships, as if she were planned to carry a kind of wooden fort at each end.

She was ready to cast off as soon as the young commander came on board; and he was greeted by loud cheers from her crowded decks.

"She is thronged to the full," said Richard. The sailing-master stood before him.

He was a square-built man, of middle age, with a red face and small, greenish-gray eyes. His beard and hair were closely cropped and stiff; he wore a steel body-coat and head-piece, but his feet were bare. An unpleasant man to look upon was Piers Fleming; and behind him stood one not more than half as old, but of the same pattern, so like he needed not to say that he was the master's son, as well as mate of the "Golden Horn."

"The wind is fair, sir," said Fleming. "We go out with the tide, but a fog is coming up the Channel."

"Cast off," said Richard. "Yonder on the height is the prince, with his lords and gentlemen, watching the going."

"Ay, ay!" responded Fleming. "He shall see the Golden Horn go out."

She cleared the harbor in gallant style, with her sails full spread, while Richard busied himself among his men. The crew was thirty strong, mostly Englishmen.

"I have but twenty men-at-arms," said Richard to himself, at the end of his inspection; "but there are two hundred and more of bowmen, and over a hundred Irish pikemen, besides the Welshmen. What bones those Irish are made with! I will serve out axes among them without delay. Fine chopping should be done by such brawny axmen as they."

"Richard Neville," whispered an eager voice at his elbow, "I pray thee harken. One of the sailors, a Londoner, understands Flemish. He hath heard the captain and his son have speech with one on the pier. There is treason afoot, my lord. Watch thou, and I will pass the word among the men."

"Tell all," said Richard, with a hot flush on his face; but there was little enough to tell. It could be but a warning, a cause for suspicion and for care.

"Guy the Bow," said Richard, at the end of their brief talk, "seek among the sailors for a true Englishman, fit to take the helm if I smite off the head of this Piers Fleming. Let thy man keep near me if a foe appears."

Yet stronger blew the south wind, and, as Piers had said, with it came a thick, bluish mist that hid the ships from one another, and made it impossible for any landsman on board of them to more than guess in what direction he might be going. It was therefore not thought of by Richard as of any importance that the Golden Horn was speeding full before the wind. She was going northerly, instead of taking a tack toward La Hogue. Right with her blew the mist, and hour after hour went by. Several times hoarse hails were heard and answered but all were in the hearty voices of loyal Englishmen, and Richard said to one of his men-at-arms:

"We are with the fleet, and all is well."

Most of them had put aside their armor, as being too heavy to wear needlessly during so sultry a day; for it was the 2d of July, 1346, and the summer was a warm one; the bowmen and pikemen also had taken off their heavy buff-coats and laid aside their arms.

But among the groups passed some of Richard's Longwood archers, talking low; and all the while, without attracting attention, sheaves of arrows, extra spears, with poleaxes and battle-axes and shields, were being handed up from the store of weapons in the hold.

Piers Fleming was at the helm, and near him stood his son. There were grim smiles on their faces while they glanced up at the rigging and out into the mist, and noted the compass and the direction of the wind.

"Son Hans," at last muttered the old man,

"it cannot be long now. Some of the Calais craft are sure to be hereabout. We will lay this tubful of English pirates alongside right speedily, if so be it is a large ship of good strength."

"They will be caught napping," growled Hans. "'T will be a fine prize, for the hold is packed to tightness."

"Well blows the wind," said Piers, "and the Golden Horn has now no company."

At the forward end of the low waist of the ship stood Richard among his men.

"Ye do know well," he said, "and all must know, that they would show no quarter. Every man fights for his life, for who is taken goes overboard, dead or alive."

"Ay," responded Ben o' Coventry; "'t is a cut-throat business. I think there would be small room for any Frenchman on the Golden Horn, if one should come aboard."

"Room enough in the sea," said the red-haired O'Rourke, who was captain of the Irish; and he turned then to talk to his gigantic kerns in their own tongue. So did a man named David Griffith talk to a throng of broad-shouldered Welshmen who were also on board, armed with short swords, daggers, and spears or darts. Of the latter several bundles now lay amidships.

Back toward the stern strode Richard slowly, and after him, as if they were drifting about without special intention, strolled three rugged-looking seamen from the old port of London.

The waves ran not too high for a gay summer cruise, and the Golden Horn rode them steadily. She was a fast sailor, for all her breadth of beam. Suddenly her course was changed, and her sails swung in a little; for a command from Captain Fleming sent men to haul on the sheets. Just then a long-drawn, vibrating whistle had been heard, and it sounded thrice, from the very direction the ship was taking.

Richard stood now on the high after-deck, and a wave of his hand could be seen by his men below. There was little apparent stir among them, but buff-coats were quickly donned, bows were strung, sheaves of arrows were cut open and distributed, while the men-at-arms made ready, and the Irish made sure of their grip upon pikes and axes.

"We will speak that ship, my lord Neville," said Fleming, very respectfully. "I have orders to report all craft we meet at sea."

"Ay, speak to her," said Richard; but he loosened his sword in its sheath, and he knew that Guy the Bow had an arrow on the string.

great cruisers. I have bidden them that we surrender."

He was steering straight for the huge vessel which now swept toward them, looking larger through the cloud of vapor; but ere he made reply Richard's sword was drawn.



"THE SAILING-MASTER STOOD BEFORE HIM."

Loudly came a hail from out of the fog; the speaker was a Frenchman, and hardly had his utterance ceased before it was followed by a tumult of fierce, triumphant cheering on board the strange vessel.

Piers Fleming sent back a hoarse reply, speaking French; and then he turned to Richard.

"She comes, my lord!" he exclaimed, as if much affrighted. "'T is one of King Philip's

"Thou art a traitor!" he shouted. "Jack of London, take thou the helm!"

"Never!" cried Fleming. "Resistance were madness! We are almost alongside of her. Ho! Monsieur de Gaines! We surrender!"

Richard's sword flashed like lightning, but even before it fell had sped the arrow of Guy the Bow. The strong hands of the ready English mariner caught the tiller as the traitorous sailing-master fell gasping to the deck. His

son Hans had been standing hard by him, pike in hand. He was taken by surprise for a moment, but he made a quick thrust at Richard. There had been deadly peril in that thrust, but that a poleax in the hand of an Irishman came down and cleft the traitor to the eyes.

The great French ship came on majestically, but Richard had given careful orders beforehand, and the Golden Horn did not avoid closing with her.

"Let them board us," he had said, and Ben o' Coventry had replied to him: "Ay, my lord o' Wartmont, and we will slay as many as we may upon our own decks before we finish upon theirs."

So little thought had the English but that they should win, no matter who came.

Louder and louder now arose the exulting yells and shouts from the swarms of armed men surging to and fro upon the fore and after forts and in the waist of "La Belle Calaise," as her grapnels were thrown out to fasten upon the Golden Horn. She was much the taller and larger vessel, and even her tops and rigging were full of men.

Alas for these! Had they been so many squirrels in the trees of Longwood, they could not have dropped faster, as the English archers plied their deadly bows. Of the latter, too, some were in the cup-like tops of the Golden Horn; and their shafts were seeking marks among the French knights and men-at-arms. It was a fearful moment, for the boarders were ready as the two ships crashed against each other.

"Steady, men! Stand fast!" shouted Richard. "Let them come on, but slay them as they come! Take the knights first; aim at the arm-holes. Waste no shaft. St. George for Merry England! For the king and for the prince!"

"For the king and for Richard of Wartmont!" shouted Ben o' Coventry.

Twang! went his bow as he spoke, and a tall knight in full armor pitched heavily forward upon the deck of the Golden Horn, shouting, "St. Denis!" as he fell. His sword had been lifted, and the gray goose shaft had taken him in the arm-pit. He would strike no more.

The Frenchmen were brave enough, and they did not seem to be dismayed even by the

dire carnage which was thinning them out so rapidly. The worst thing against them was that all this was so entirely unexpected. They had counted upon taking the English ship by surprise, aided by the treachery of Piers Fleming and his son. The Golden Horn had been steered by them many a long mile out of her proper course, and the same trick may have been played upon others of King Edward's transports; for he had been compelled to employ sailors of all the nationalities along the Channel and the North Sea, excepting a few that favored the Frenchmen.

The fighting force on La Belle Calaise was not only double the number of that on the Golden Horn, but it contained five times as many men-at-arms. There the advantage ended, however; for the rest of it consisted of a motley mob of all sorts, woefully inferior in arms, discipline, and even in bodily strength, to the chosen fighters who were commanded by Richard of Wartmont.

For a few minutes he had kept his post on the high deck at the stern, that he might better see how the fight was going. Then, however, with his score of men in full armor, he went down in the waist, stepping forward to meet the onset of the French knights who dashed in to avenge their fallen leader. He had not been their only commander, evidently; for now in their front there stood a knight whose splendid arms and jeweled crest marked him as a noble of high rank.

"God and St. Denis!" he shouted. "Down with the dogs of England!"

"St. George and King Edward! I am Richard Neville of Wartmont. Who art thou?"

Their swords were crossing as the Frenchman responded, "Antoine, Count De Renly! Down with thee, thou of Wartmont! I will give an account of thee to thy boy Black Prince."

"I am another boy, as he is," was the reply from the young lord; for his antagonist was certainly not taller than himself, and they were not badly matched.

All around them the fierce *mêlée* went on. Arrows whizzed; the spears of the Welshmen flew; there was hard hammering of sword and ax on helm and shield. One fact came out which men of knightly degree might otherwise

have doubted. It was seen that a strong Irishman, with only his buff-coat for armor or for weight, could swing a weapon more freely and with better effect than could a brave knight a head shorter, of lighter bones, weighed down by armor of proof and a steel-faced shield. Fierce was the wild Irish war-cry with which these brawny men of Ulster and Connaught rushed forward, and their swinging blows were as the stroke of death. Shields were dashed aside, helmets and mail were cloven through. Slain they were, a number of them; but they had not fallen uselessly — there were not now so many Frenchmen in full armor.

Richard and De Renly were skilled swordsmen, and for a time neither of them seemed able to gain any advantage. The youthful Frenchman was a knight of renown, however, and it angered him to be checked by a mere youngster, a boy, a squire only, from the household of the Black Prince. He lost his temper, and pushed forward rashly, forgetting that he was not now upon firm land. The wind still blew, and the waves were lifting the ships, grinding them one against the other with shocks that were staggering. There was blood upon the deck at the spot where the mailed foot of the count was pressed. He slipped as he struck, and the sword of the English boy smote hard upon his crest.

A rush, another slip, another blow, and De Renly lay upon the deck, with the point of Richard's blade at the bars of his helmet.

"Yield thee, De Renly!" he shouted, "rescue or no rescue. Yield, or thou diest!"

"I yield!" came hoarsely back; "but myself only, not my ship."

"Yield thee!" said Richard, taking away his sword. "We will care for thy boat."

Loudly laughed the O'Rourke at Neville's triumph; and he smote down a man-at-arms right across the fallen De Renly.

"Hout! my lord of Wartmont!" he shouted. "Thou art a good sword! On, Ulster and Connaught! Ireland forever! Hew them down, ye men of the fens! We have a doughty captain!"

Even in that boast it was shown that some of Richard's men — not those of Longwood — had doubted him on account of his youth, in

spite of the tale of his victory over Clod the Club.

The rush of the French boarders was checked, but not repelled, so many they were and so desperate; but they met now another force. A cunning man was Ben o' Coventry, and fit to be a captain; for he had drawn away a number of Welsh and Irish and some bowmen, for whom there was no room in the waist of the ship. He led them to the prow, which was almost bare of men, save a few archers. It had swung away at first, but now it was hugging closely the high forecastle of La Belle Calaise.

"Forward, my men!" he shouted. "It is our turn to board! Slay as ye go!"

They rushed against a cluster of mere sailormen, half armed, who had been posted there to keep them out of the way. They were hardly soldiers, although they were fierce enough; and they were mere cattle before the rush of Ben o' Coventry and his mighty followers. The Welshmen spared none of them; and soon the French in the deep waist of La Belle Calaise, pressing forward to reinforce their half-defeated boarders, were suddenly startled by a deadly shower of darts and arrows that fell upon them from their own forecastle. Then, as they turned in dismay, they shouted to their comrades upon the Golden Horn:

"Back! back! lest our own ship be lost! The English have boarded us!"

There was a moment of hesitation; and so at that critical moment no help came to the remaining Frenchmen in the waist of the Golden Horn. They were even outnumbered, since all the archers in the wooden forts fore and aft, twanging their deadly bows almost in safety, counted against the bewildered boarders. No more knights came down from La Belle Calaise. The common men were falling like corn before the reaper.

"On!" shouted Richard. "It is our fight now! Short work is good work!"

The O'Rourke yelled something in the old Erse tongue, and his giants followed him as he fought his way to the side of Richard Neville; but David Griffith summoned his remaining Welshmen, and was followed also by two score of Kentish bowmen, as he hastened forward to join Ben o' Coventry and his daring

fellows on the forecastle of La Belle Calaise. It was time, for there were good French knights yet left to lead in a desperate attempt to dislodge them. It was, however, as if the deck or roof of that wooden fort, made with bulwarks and barricades to protect it against all enemies of France, had been just as well prepared to be held by an English garrison. Moreover, all manner of weapons had been put there, ready for use; and among these were pikes and lances with which the Welshmen could thrust at the men who tried to climb the ladders from the waist, while the archers shot for dear life, unerringly.

"My Lord Beaumont," shouted one of the French men-at-arms, "all of our boarders on the English ship are down or taken. Not one is left. Here come the Neville and his tigers. God and St. Denis! We are lost!"

"Courage!" returned Beaumont. "Fight on. We shall overcome them yet!"

But a heavy mace, hurled by a big Cornishman on the forecastle, at that moment smote him on the helm. He fell stunned, while his dismayed comrades shrank back from the storm of English arrows and from the mad rush of Richard and his men-at-arms and the O'Rourke and his Irish axmen.

The French were actually beaten in detail, their greater numbers at no time doing them any good.

In each part of the fight they had had fewer men at the front, and the few that now remained fit to fight seemed to be in a manner surrounded.

"Quarter, if thou wilt surrender!" cried Richard to a knight with closed vizor, with whom he was crossing swords.

"Quarter!" came faintly back. "Surrender—" and then he sank upon one knee, for he was wounded by an arrow in the thigh.

"All good knights yield themselves to me!" again shouted Richard in French. "They who hold out are lost!"

More than one of them still fought on in a kind of despair, but others laid down their swords at the feet of Richard. As for any other of the defenders of La Belle Calaise, it was sad to seek them; for the Golden Horn had no man left on board of her, save Jack of London at

the helm, and the English pikes were everywhere plying mercilessly.

"Leave not one!" shouted the O'Rourke, hoarsely, to his kerns. "Not one of us had they spared, if we had been taken. Let Lord Wartmont care for his gentlemen. They will all pay ransom."

So quickly all was over; and all that was left of the force which that morning had crowded the deck under the brave Monsieur de Gaines was less than half of his brave gentlemen, hardly one of them without a wound.

The Sieur de Beaumont had now recovered his senses; but as he arose and looked around him, he exclaimed:

"Brave Richard of Wartmont, I would thou wouldst show me the mercy to throw me into the sea. How shall I face my king after such a disgrace as this!"

"'T was not thy fault, brave sir," said Richard courteously. "It is the fortune of war. Say to thy king, from me, that thy ship was lost when the Comte de Gaines tumbled so many of his force into the Golden Horn. I trow that he knew not how ready were we to meet him."

"The traitorous Fleming—" began the count, but Richard interrupted him.

"Not traitor to thee," he said. "He is dead, indeed; and his trap caught not us, but thee and thy commander. How art thou, now, Sieur De Renly? I thank thee for slipping well, else thy good sword had done thee better service."

Like a true gentleman, the brave youth spoke kindly to them all, and their hurts were cared for. The several ransoms for each knight were agreed upon; but they had now no further need for armor, and they were soon appareled only in clothing of wool and linen, or silk and leather, as the case might be.

As for the ships, they had sustained small injury in the fight. Now that it was over, the grapplings were cast off, and each rode the waves on its own account. It was hard to provide skilled crews for both, but a shift was made by dividing the seamen, and by such selections as could be had from among the soldiery. Jack of London was made the sailing-master of the Golden Horn, and a seafaring man from Hull was in like manner put in charge of La Belle Calaise.

There was now no crowding of men upon either ship; but there was much care to be given to so many scores of wounded.

The fog had cleared away, and the Golden Horn, with her prize, could make a pretty straight course for La Hogue, thanks to a change in the wind.

"Art thou hurt at all?" asked Guy the Bow, when he next met his young commander.

"Nay," said Richard, "unless bruises and a sore head may count for hurts. But we have lost a third part of our force, killed or wounded."

"Well that we lost not all, and our own lives," said Guy. "'T was close work for a while. Glad am I that our lady of Wartmont is to hear no bad news."

"Ay," said Richard; "and now I will tell thee, thou true man, when I write to her, I will bear thee witness that to thee and Ben o' Coventry is it due that she hath not lost her son."

"I would like her to think well of me," said Guy, smiling with pleasure; "but I pray thee speak well to the Prince of the O'Rourke and his long-legged kerns, and of David Griffith. They deserve well of the king."

"Trust me for that," said Richard. "And now, ere the dark hour, I must read my mother's letter. Truth to tell, I could not so much as look at it while I was watching that traitor Fleming, and preparing for what I thought might come. I have already thanked all the men and visited my prisoners. Brave ransom will some of them pay."

"And the prize-money for us all," added Guy, with a chuckle. "We may be rich when we return from France."

So he went forward, and Richard sat down to his letter, to read the good words his mother sent him, and to dream of Wartmont and of Longwood, and of the old days before the war.

Then there was sleeping, save for those who could not sleep for their hurts or their misfortunes. It was well on in the forenoon of the following day before the Golden Horn and her captive companion sailed gaily in among the forest of masts that had gathered at La Hogue.

Only a short hour later the young lord of Wartmont, with some of his chosen followers

and those of his prisoners that were highest in rank, stood in an open space among the camps of King Edward's army.

The king himself was there, and with him were earls and knights and captains not a few. By his side stood the brave Black Prince; but it was to the king that Richard and those who were with him bent the knee, while the young man made his report of the taking of La Belle Calaise.

He was modest enough; but the bright eyes of the prince kindled finely as he heard it, and he said in a low voice to his father:

"Did I not tell thee I was right to intrust a ship to him?"

"The boy did well," said the king dryly; for he was a man hard to please. "Thou Richard of Wartmont, honor to thee and thy merry men all! Thou and the Prince are to win spurs of knighthood, side by side, ere we sail again for England. Sir Walter de Maunay will bid thee where to go."

Richard bent low, and rose to his feet. Sir Walter stepped forward to speak to the Sieur De Renly and the other captured knights. The archers and men-at-arms of Richard's command stood still where they were, waiting for orders; but the Black Prince beckoned Richard aside to get from him the full particulars of a fray so gallantly fought and won.

"I envy thee," he said; "thy hand-to-hand close with De Renly. Thou hast fine war-fortune with thee; and the king is ever better pleased than he will tell."

It must have been so, for at that moment King Edward was turning to a noble-looking knight who stood near him.

"Cousin John Beauchamp of Warwick," he said, "thou mayest be proud of thy young kinsman. Those of thy blood are apt to make good captains."

"Thanks, sire," responded the Earl of Warwick, flushing with pride. "I trust there may never fail thee plenty of stout Beauchamps and Nevilles to stand in the front rank of the gallant men of England. But I pray thee mark how the boy handled his archers and his Irishmen—"

"And how he watched the traitors and trapped the treason," laughed a gray-bearded

warrior at his side. "He has his wits about him."

"Yea, Norfolk," said the king, with a gloom upon his face; "the men who are to defend

against Philip of Valois are all from our own islands. Not a man below a man-at-arms can even speak French."

So the king's wisdom spoke for itself, while



"YIELD THERE, DE RENLY!" HE SHOUTED, "RESCUE OR NO RESCUE. YIELD, OR THOU DIEST!"

England and defeat her enemies must watch against treason by night and by day. 'T was a Fleming that set the trap for the Golden Horn; and the men who are to march with us

Sir Walter de Maunay and the prince sent Richard Neville and his brave men to the camp where they were to pass the night; for the whole army was to march away next morning.

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(To be continued.)

SOME RUSSIAN GAMES.

BY P. KITTY KONDACHEFF.

THERE are many outdoor Russian games, but as they are now seldom played, except by village children, or in the schools of far-away

account of the constant hopping of one of the players, or from the way in which the wooden "cone" is made to jump up and fly, is not



RUSSIAN BOYS PLAYING TCHIJICK.

eastern provinces bordering on Siberia, where tennis and foot-ball have not as yet taken root, they are little known to outsiders. Some, however, are still popular, and are found over all the great Russian Empire. I will try to describe several of those best known and most indulged in, such as *Tchijick*, *Lapta*, and *Gorodki*.

TCHIJICK.

THE game is like your game "tip cat." The word *Tchijick*, properly translated, means "finch"; and whether the game is so called on

known. The players may amount to any number, but five or six is the best combination, so as not to keep the others waiting too long while the "striker" and "hopper," as I will call them, are at work. A circle of about six feet in diameter is traced on the ground, in the center of which is deposited the so-called *tchijick*, or finch, a round stick of wood, six inches long, having each end shaped something like a cone. It is either placed across a small hollow in the ground, or with one end resting on a bit of stick or stone an inch or two high.

The players, armed with short, stout sticks, then draw lots so as

to determine by chance who is to begin the first service, and who is to do the hopping; the others range themselves in order around the circle, the striker taking his place near the finch. The signal given, the striker serves the finch,—that is, he gives it a smart rap with his stick over one end, so as to make it jump high up,—and while in midair follows this with one or more sharp raps, sending it as far out of the circle as possible—the farther the better. The hopper then sets off, and must arrive at the exact place where the finch falls, hopping along

on one foot. Lifting it up from the ground, he must send it back, with the aid of his stick, into the circle again. If it fall on the line, it is reckoned *in*. Should he fail in doing this, or in arriving safely on one foot to where the finch lies and back to his place again, he remains hopper to the next service. If, however, he passes both ordeals safely, he takes his place among the players again, while the striker turns hopper, the boy next in order taking his place. The score is reckoned in the following way: A certain number is fixed upon previous to beginning the game,—say, twenty-five. Each time the striker hits the finch he scores one. Now, good players manage to touch it several times while in midair, short, jerky cuts from the wrist following swiftly on each other; sometimes as many as five raps are given in quick succession, the striker always remaining within the limits of the circle. He scores the number of raps given, and the player who first reaches the number previously agreed



THE "TCHIJICK" OR FINCH.

upon wins. The striker is thus changed after each service, while the hopper, unless he has good muscles and a sure aim, often has to go through the hopping process during many turns, thereby sometimes missing his own turn of serving. If the stakes are nuts, candy, or anything of that sort, then each boy loses to the winner as many as are wanting in his score to make up the twenty-five.

LAPTA.

HERE, again, the number of players, divided into two camps, is indefinite. The "leader"—that is, the boy who begins the game—stands between the two "homes" (which are as far apart as space conveniently allows—say, from fifty to one hundred feet or more), and flings a common rubber ball high into the air. As soon as the ball has left his hand, the whole of his side rush forward toward the enemy's home. They must reach this, and get back to

their own home again while the ball is still flying. The enemy lie in wait to catch the ball, and if caught before the runners have reached their home, it is sent after them, and should it hit any player, he is reckoned *out*, and takes no more part in the proceedings. Next the other side "leads," and so on; the number of runs made deciding the victory. Of course the "leader" ought to be first-rate at flinging a ball high, so as to give time to all his partners to accomplish the runs; and he may also, by

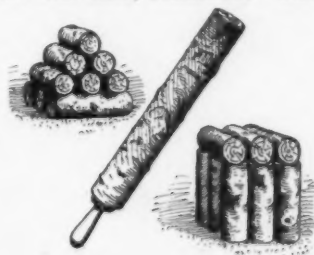


DIAGRAM OF LAPTA GROUND.

catching the ball himself as it falls to the ground, prevent its being taken by the enemy. As to the runners, they should scatter all over the field, for when they are running in a mass it will prove much easier to hit them with the ball. But a great deal depends on the leader; for if he be not up to the mark, the game is often a failure on account of the many hits which are made, for these cripple the forces and reduce them greatly in number.

GORODKI.

Gorodok (plural *Gorodki*) means "a small town, citadel, or fort." The players, divided into two sides or camps, may again amount to any even number, and the accessories required are eighteen smooth sticks of wood, six inches long by one inch thick, besides the "hurling-stick," or



THE GORODKI IMPLEMENTS.

bat, with which each player is equipped. Two circles, each four feet in diameter, are traced upon the ground, about sixty feet apart, and these represent the opposing forts. A dividing-line is drawn between, at an equal distance from each *gorodok*.



THE SALAZKYS ATTACHED TO A SLEIGH.

In the center of each fort the sticks are built up into a tower, no style of architecture being required, provided only it represents a compact mass. Then the sides draw lots and play in turn, the purpose being to knock the enemy's tower out of bounds. Let us say that player No. 1 of Fort A begins. He takes his stand

just in front of his own gorodok, and hurls his bat at the enemy's tower. If he strikes it, but does not send it, or part of it, out of the circle, the sticks remain just as they fall, and are not replaced before the end of the game. If he manages to send even one stick out of bounds, it gives him the privilege, when next he plays,

THE RUSSIAN WINTER SPORT, "NODALKA," "IT IS QUITE IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP ONE'S HOLD UPON THE SLED FOR MORE THAN A FEW ROUNDS."



of standing at the half-line. Should a stick fall across the gorodok-line, it is placed upright where it fell, and is called a "pop." Next plays No. 2, of Fort B; then again a member from A; and so on, until one of the citadels is razed to the ground, which makes the other side winner by the number of sticks remaining within its own gorodok.

This is the single game; but a whole set of games is generally played, with a previously fixed number of points, as in the *tchijick*. *Gorodki* is a very entertaining, though sometimes a rather dangerous game; and the players of both sides ought to stand well out of harm's way and at a good distance from the server, as the bats, being wont to swerve, especially when hurled by an unpractised hand, often go spinning in an utterly unlooked-for direction and may do harm.

SALAZKY. NOÏDALKA.

AND NOW I will tell you of two favorite amusements, not games, indulged in by both boys and girls in winter-time. The first is this: Three or four horses are harnessed to a big sleigh, large enough for several persons, and to the hind part of this sleigh a small sled, called *Salazky*, and resembling your American toboggan, is hitched. A second is tied to the first, and when the young people have all taken their seats on these *salazkys*,—generally crowding them terribly,—away they go!

In the country, when the roads are good, the track just wide enough for a large-sized sleigh to pass, with soft, white snow walls on either hand, and three fresh, strong horses to pull, the fun is great, especially where the road turns! Of course the driver does not go any the slower at the sharp corners because he has a youthful crew hanging on behind. On the contrary, he just cracks his whip and lets the horses fly, with the natural result. The small sledges behind, going off in a half-circle, upset with an accompaniment of shouts and laughter, pitching the youngsters into the snow!

It used to be the custom formerly, during the carnival merrymakings, to set out with six or eight horses, going first to some neighbor, who

would hitch on a diminutive sleigh; thence to some other friend, who would do likewise; and so on, until sometimes as many as fifteen could be seen skimming over the roads in Indian file. This, however, has been given up now, it being a rather perilous experiment—as a fall out of a real sleigh can never prove as harmless as the toppling over of a *salazky*. But it was great fun, nevertheless.

The second pastime is more local, belonging chiefly to Southern, or Little, Russia. It is called *Noïdalka* and resembles somewhat a merry-go-round, only it is a thousand times better fun. When Jack Frost (or, to give him his Russian name and title, "*Moròs Krasninos*"*) has taken the lake, pond, or river well in hand, covering it with a solid sheet of ice more than a yard thick, a stake is fixed firmly in, and on this stake an old wagon-wheel is placed, as on its axle. Two thin poles, some twenty-five feet long or more, are then tied by one end to the wheel, and at the other end of each pole a *salazky* is firmly attached.

A wide circle is cleared of all snow, and then some of the party, thrusting strong poles in between the spokes of the wheel, run around it, giving it a rotary movement, and making the *salazkys* spin along at a tremendous rate. The fun consists in letting one's self drop, or rather slip, off when in full career and glide away over the ice. Anyway, it is quite impossible to keep one's hold for more than a few rounds; and I remember, years ago, doing my utmost to remain on, nearly lying flat on the sled, and clutching on to it for dear life,—all in vain! If you do not drop off of your own free will, choosing your time and place for the final slide, at a given moment, *volens volens*, you have to let go your hold! You are forcibly torn from the *salazky* by a strength far superior to your own, and are made to slide away at a tangent,—away from the *noïdalka*, along the smooth ice, to a great distance; sometimes on your side, often sprawling on your back, or sitting in a dignified posture until you reach the limits of the cleared space and the snow-wall beyond, when—up you fly, like a rocket, all dignity thrown to the winds, heels in the air, head fore-

* "*Morose Red-nose*"—so called on account of the frost's tingeing people's noses such lovely shades of pink, red, and even purple!

most, into the snow—as though you were taking a header!

Of all the winter pleasures I know,—and we have many in Russia, where the cold season lasts some five months,—I believe none is more glorious or more invigorating than the *noïdalka*! Snow in your sleeves and down your collar, snow in your ears and mouth sometimes,—the smooth sliding, the rough headers, the laughter, fun, and joy! No; most decidedly, no other frolic,—pure frolic,—such as one loves “just for the fun of it all,” can compare with this!

But should any of you, my friends, wish to

try it, do not forget that the ice must be *very* thick, and *very* smooth also, otherwise you will be black and blue with bruises before you have time to name your own “Jack Robinson”; and remember also that the force which sends you along after having torn you from your sled is tremendous, and will take you away to a good distance over the ice; so it is a matter of serious import that no holes or fissures in the ice, ridges or other obstructions, be near.

Try the *noïdalka*, my friends. I am sure you will enjoy it, as I used ages ago; but pray be careful and take no unnecessary risks.

“OLD DOLLY.”

BY CATHARINE YOUNG GLEN.

“NEW DOLLY” came on Christmas,

Upon the Christmas tree;
And Mama Polly danced and pranced,
And capered wild with glee.
She thought this fairest child the flower
Of all her family.

New Dolly's curls were flaxen,
New Dolly's eyes were blue;
New Dolly's cheeks were waxen,
New Dolly's gown was — new!
Her little feet were silken-socked,
And each in satin shoe.

“Old Dolly” looked *so* shabby
Beside New Dolly's clothes!
Her arms were thin and flabby,
The paint was off her nose;
And once she hit the sidewalk hard,
And parted with her toes.

She lay there in the doll-house,
A poor forlorn old scrap!
And if her heart *was* sawdust,
It ached a bit, mayhap,
To see New Dolly in her place
On Mama Polly's lap.

But Polly's own dear mother,—
The dollies' grandmama,—
Just three days after Christmas
She laughed a soft “Ha, ha!”



For in that doll-house corner
A wondrous thing was shown:
Forgotten quite, and stiff with spite,
New Dolly sat alone!
While safe and snug in Polly's arms
Old Dolly held her throne.

"OLD DOLLY"

Old Dolly's limbs were limber;
 New Dolly's joints — were n't right.
 Old Dolly's clothes were "offs and ons,"
 New Dolly's sewed on tight.
 Old Dolly fitted box and crib,
 New Dolly would n't — quite.

Old Dolly's head was fashioned
 Of smoothest chinaware;
 She could be scrubbed with "really soap,"—
 New Dolly had "live hair,"
 And after *she* was washed her cheeks
 Stuck fast to Polly's chair!

So evenings, when the Sandman
 Steals out from Sleepy Town,
 And rockers rock before the fire,
 It flickers up and down
 Upon Old Dolly's china pate,
 And Polly's tumbled crown!

And when the small girl's mother
 Tucks Polly into bed,
 And kisses on the pillow
 That little tired head,—
 That head whose curls try vainly
Another head to hide,—
 She softly pulls the curtains,
 And leaves them side by side,—
 Dear Polly's eyes a-dreaming,
 Old Dolly's watching wide!





"FATHER TIME WAS AT HIS WITS' END TO KNOW WHAT TO DO." (SEE PAGE 171.)

THE PURLOINED CHRISTMAS.

BY GELETT BURGESS.

NONE of the Vernal Months had heard anything, for they had slept too soundly in their pink spring beds on the ground floor. They were a dimpled, blushing trio, the youngest and gayest daughters of old Father Time. Mistress May had twined arbutus around their room, and little April had spread the floor with pussy-willow; so soft that one could hear never a footfall.

The Summer Sisters, too, had heard no one

enter, but had purred musically, the whole night through, in their rose-hung apartments on the second floor of the House of Annum. Augusta had heard absolutely nothing. But, then, every one knew she was a very sleepy maid.

Nor were the Autumnal Virgins aware of the robbery, and the Winter Months had not awakened. And yet a great misfortune had fallen upon the house where dwelt the twelve

Maiden Months in the four suites of the Seasons; thieves had entered during the night, and six of the most valuable possessions of the household had been stolen! Six precious days had been filched from the calendar of the House of Annum! February had lost her fourteenth, and May her first day. July's fourth was missing. October looked in vain for her last day, while November could find but three Thursdays in her set. But, worst of all, *the 25th of December was gone!* How was the year to be carried on? What *could* be done without Christmas?

Old Father Time was furious. The other holidays might be supplied somehow; if only some movable holiday had been stolen, now, almost any of the days near it might have been used, and no one but a few almanac-makers would have been the wiser. It would be pretty hard to keep the loss of the 4th of July quiet; but as for Christmas, it was simply impossible to conceal its absence; the Year would be disgraced unless the 25th of December was brought back on time!

There was no time to be lost, either; for the earth was bowling along around the sun as if nothing had happened; and the Signs of the Zodiac were calling at frequent intervals. The news of the burglary soon spread up the Decade, through the Nineteenth Century, and it became known before long all over the Christian Era! The chief customers began to arrive at the House of Annum, and Father Time could hardly stand still with the worry. St. Valentine was highly incensed — there could, would, and should be no love-making until the 14th of February was found! The halls fairly shimmered with ghosts and hobgoblins asking for news of All-Hallowe'en. The Hobby-horse bewailed the loss of May-day — the only time of the year when he could get any exercise.

The turkeys were, in fact, the only things that did not regret the larceny. They thought that they might get along one year without Thanksgiving day, and do their own gobbling.

So Father Time called his daughters together in the great hall of the House of Annum, and they came down to him, Season by Season, robed in pink and white and brown and golden-red. And they talked and talked and

talked, as folk will over a burglary. January was very cool, indeed; for she had lost nothing. Miss March blustered and blew into a temper; and April alternately wept and laughed hysterically. Augusta was hot with anger at the outrage; and the melancholy November was sullen, and her countenance was overcast.

At last, after many inquiries, Father Time found among the servants an old Equinox who had been kept awake by the gossiping whispers of the Autumnal Maidens; she had seen a mortal in the House of Annum! And then the Summer Solstice confessed, with tears of contrition, that she had, the evening before, let in a beautiful beggar-maid with long hair and eyes of brook-hazel!

Then all the Months cried, and St. Valentine cried, "Oh, it is the Princess Pittipums that has stolen the days! None else so fair, and none else so clever, as to gain entrance into the House of Annum, and find the most precious of our holidays!" For Pittipums had played mischievously with the universe before this, and at one time had even stolen a star to wear in her hair!

So Father Time despatched messengers forthwith to go and summon the pretty culprit, and restore the missing days to their proper places in the calendar. And they found the Princess Pittipums on a little throne, playing with May-day, queening herself with a thousand playful fancies. So they haled her back into the hall, crying, and the Maiden Months reproached her. And as she was a fickle baggage, she confessed her sinlets with a great show of penitence, and told them where the days were hid.

The 14th of February she had hidden in the heart of a crusty old bachelor, a scoffer at lovers' follies. Who would have dreamed of looking there? The 4th of July she had concealed in the crown of the Queen of England; surely, no one could have thought of that place! The last day of October she had been naughty enough to tuck into the globe of an electric light, so that no ghost might ever find it; and as for Thanksgiving day, the turkeys stood guard over that, where it was buried in the northeast corner of her uncle's barnyard.

So after much trouble the purloined days

were recovered at last, just in time for them to be used (and, indeed, Thanksgiving day was dug up a little late, and did n't begin till five o'clock of the morning) — all except Christmas day, which the naughty Pittipums absolutely refused to return! It got to be late and later, and Father Time was at his wits' end to know what to do. The 21st was already finished, the 22d was taken down and used,—the 23d,—and at last came the 24th, and the Princess was still obstinate! Was the whole world to skip Christmas day for her perversity? Every one in the House of Annum was cast down; never since the world began had the Year been in such danger. The Virgin Months offered her the pick of the weather for a whole year; she should have any days stretched to fit her pleasure, or shrunk if they went on wrong, if she would *only* return the 25th!

Santa Claus was in despair, but, hoping against hope, he packed his toys with an anxious face, and prepared for his ride, ready to start on the instant, should Pittipums relent. His reindeer stood whinnying at the gate, but he dared not start on his rounds, for fear the stroke of midnight should launch him into the day *after* Christmas. It got to be six o'clock, eight o'clock,—eleven o'clock,—and Father Time was just about to take the 26th day out of the cupboard, when the Lady December came

weeping to the Princess Pittipums for a last appeal.

"Oh, Pittipums," said December, "I pray you, spare me my disgrace, and return my 25th, that the little children may keep Christmas day!"

Then the Princess Pittipums peered out of the window of the great House of Annum, and far down below upon the earth she beheld a million little children in their little beds, and their stockings, and all—dreaming of Santa Claus. "It really is too bad," she said; "but the fact is, the 25th is my birthday, and I want to keep it out of the Year, so that I may never grow any older!"

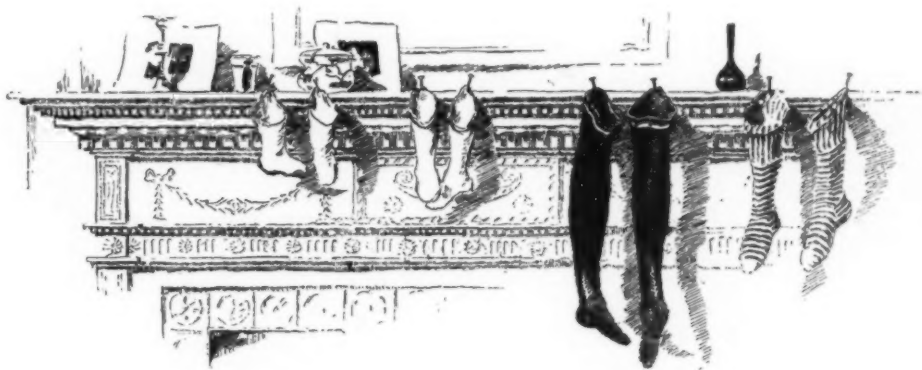
Then all the Maiden Months cried, and Father Time cried, "But no one grows *older* on Christmas day; indeed, every one grows *younger*!"

"What!—really?" said the Princess.

"Oh, surely!" said Father Time. "It has been that way for nearly nineteen hundred years, now."

"Why, then, here 's the day; for of course I don't need it," said Pittipums; and she took a very merry Christmas out of her sleeve, where 't had been safe and warm all the time. It was now exactly one half-minute to twelve.

With a whoop, Santa Claus jumped into his sleigh, slashed at the reindeer, and was off, pell-mell!



EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE winsome little maid who welcomes our readers upon the threshold of this Christmas number needs no introduction, and the handful of Christmas stockings needs no explanation. We hope ST. NICHOLAS young folks will also like the decorative garland that typifies the circle of the year, and the chosen quotations that poetically name and describe the months. Here is the floral setting in the border: January, the Holly; February, the Pussy-willow; March, the Crocus; April, the Violet; May, the Apple-blossom; June, the Rose; July, the Clover; August, the Oxeye daisy; September, Wheat; October, Autumn leaves; November, bare branches; December, the Mistletoe.

This brings us around to the beginning of the ring, so that the holly and the mistletoe come together at the top—as they should.

To the quotations for the months, we will add here Whittier's beautiful lines about the year, from his poem, "The Last Walk in Autumn":

"Rich gift of God! A year of time!
What pomp of rise and shut of day,
What hues wherewith our northern clime
Makes autumn's dropping woodlands gay,
What airs outblown from ferny dells,
And clover-bloom and sweetbrier smells,

What songs of brooks and birds, what fruits and flowers,
Green woods and moonlit snows, have in its round
been ours!"

The sports described in the article in the present number entitled "Some Russian Games" will, no doubt, interest American boys and girls, who will probably find the lively merry-go-round called "Noidalka" especially to their liking.

This game of the whirling sleds must be a very spirited one, and it would not surprise us to hear that it had been tried and adopted by many youngsters in our country.

The author has already warned her readers that in playing "Noidalka" the ice must be smooth and clear for a long distance around the wheel, and we wish to make the warning more emphatic.

When flung from the whirling sled the player flies so swiftly over the ice that even a bit of roughened ice might do serious damage—as any skater who has fallen while going at full speed will testify.

See, therefore, that the ice is clear and glassy for several hundred yards in every direction, before trying this exciting sport.

THE LETTER-BOX.

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We have taken you for nearly nine years. I like you very much. You very seldom print any letters from Japan. I am an American. There are very few American girls here. They are mostly English.

I have a bicycle and love to ride.

In the July number of 1897 I saw a story about M. de Lafayette. I like old-time stories very much. I wish some one would write about George Washington. I like him very much. I have a book, and every picture I get of Washington I put in it. I have a good many.

I have done quite a lot of traveling. I was born out here and went to New York when I was four years old. I have been to England, Scotland, China, Japan, and America. I like to go on a steamer very much, although I do get sick sometimes.

I am your loving reader, LILLIAN M. MORSE.

CHICAGO, ILL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken you for three years, but I have never written to you before. My mama when she was a little girl took the "Young Folks," which was afterward merged in ST. NICHOLAS.

My home is in Chicago, Ill., but I have been visiting an aunt and uncle at Fort Logan, Col., and I am going to tell you of my lovely visit there.

If any of your readers have ever been to a fort they know how very interesting it is. In the morning the cannon booms at six o'clock (which used to wake me up). Then at eleven they have guard-mount—that is what they call it, but I do not see why, because they do

not mount horses or anything else. The band plays and the soldiers have a long, fine drill. They all wear white hats and white gloves. Saturday they have inspection. The cavalry have a very pretty uniform. Their helmets have long yellow plumes, and their uniform has gold braid and gold buttons on it, and of course their trousers have yellow stripes. Their horses are very pretty, and they are all the same color except the two trumpeters' or buglers' horses, which are white. The trappings are kept very clean, and the bridles shine very brightly in this lovely clear sunshine, for it is only on the clear, lovely days that they have dress parade; on the other days they wear their ordinary uniforms. There are about sixteen men in the guard-house or the fort prison. They have to do a good deal of work about the fort, but with every two men there is a guard with loaded gun or rifle; and if a prisoner should try to run away the guard might shoot him.

The men make up very funny rhymes to some of the bugle-calls. Every night when the sun goes down they lower the flag, the band plays the national air, the cannon booms (and scares me), and they call the roll, and if any of the men are not there when their names are read they have a pretty hard time of it.

So ends a very lovely day at Fort Logan and my letter to ST. NICHOLAS.

Your loving friend and reader,

HENRIETTA HOLMES.

RAMONA CONVENT, CAL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a young Spanish girl—that is, my father came from Spain, but I was born here

in California. I like your magazine very much, and have taken it for eight years.

I would like to tell you about the rancho, which is my home during the school vacations. Papa owns about three hundred acres of orange-grove and vineyard on the San Gabriel River.

Our house is in the center of a large grove of orange-trees, and at Christmas time the air is heavy with the perfume of the blossoms. The orchard is beautiful then with the golden fruit and snowy blossoms hiding in the dark-green foliage of the trees.

I am being educated at a convent about twenty miles from the rancho. I like it very much, except that I sometimes get homesick, even though the nuns are very kind. There are about fifty girls here, and we have fine times, though of course there is a regular routine as there is at all boarding-schools. In the morning we have our book studies, and in the afternoon our fancy-work, music, and drawing. Then after that we, with several nuns to look after us, go out for our tennis or croquet or anything else we like.

I remain your affectionate reader,

ROWENA ACOSTA.

CAMDEN, N. J.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: A party of five, myself included, took a trip to Washington, our famous capital, last summer. We had a delightful time, visiting the Capitol, the White House, the Washington Monument, the new Congressional Library, and many other places of interest.

I think the Library is the most magnificent and wonderful structure I ever beheld, although I have not traveled to any great extent. It is one solid mass of marble inside and out, with wonderful paintings and statues to represent many of the world's greatest poets, dramatists, and others of note.

By means of some new invention which I do not quite understand, books can be sent from the Library to the Capitol in a very few minutes.

The monument is also very interesting. It is an obelisk. Its height from floor of entrance to tip is 555 feet 5 1/4 inches. The monument is the highest work of masonry in the world, and is exceeded in height only by the Eiffel Tower, of iron. The interior is lighted by electricity, which affords opportunity of seeing the memorial stones, which are set in the inner face of the monument. The 179 stones were contributed from various sources as tributes to Washington, and many of them are notable for their beauty, elaborate carving, or origin.

I hope the readers of ST. NICHOLAS will be interested in my letter, as I have been very much pleased with some of theirs. Your enthusiastic reader,

EDNA LANE PYLE.

LITTLE BAY, MONUMENT BEACH, MASS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I write to tell you of a very interesting thing I saw last summer. My brother and I had captured a large blue crab, and we sat down to watch it. Pretty soon we saw it begin to move its claws in a strange way. After a little while we noticed that it was trying to crawl out of its shell. First one claw and then another drew slowly out; then the whole shell seemed to be sliding off its back. At last it was entirely out, and we noticed that the new shell was very soft; indeed, it seemed more like a skin, and was a beautiful blue in color. Soon after the crab died.

I have a pony of which I am very fond, and he knows me so well that he whinnies whenever he hears my voice or my step.

We once had a great big gray horse, who had a very thick skin, and when they were put out in the paddock together the pony would stand back to "Noel," for that

was the horse's name, and kick, but it made no difference to the big horse, who stood there calmly until the pony was tired, only giving him now and then a gentle, fatherly nip. It was very funny.

I am twelve years old, and have taken ST. NICHOLAS for a long time, and it is always a happy day when I hear that ST. NICHOLAS has come. Good-by. From your devoted reader,

CATHARINE GARDNER.

PAPOOSE ISLAND.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I live on an island in the St. Lawrence River. It is called Papoose because it is so small. It is near Grindstone Island.

I have a brother and also a sister. My brother's name is Fellowes. He is eight. I have a sister whose name is Pauline. Fellowes read the story about the boy who had a wind-mill; he lived in a forest with his mother and sister, and his father had gone to the village. Fellowes thought he would like to have a wind-mill too; so he asked our boatman to show him how to make them. He has four now—one on each side of the island. They all go very fast, and they all have weathercocks.

I have a bookcase, and I have one shelf for the ST. NICHOLAS.

I remain your faithful reader, BEATRICE MORGAN.

BUFFALO, N. Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I thought some of your readers might like to hear about my bird. We open his cage-door, and he hops out. If you call him he comes and sits on your head. Sometimes he flies on mother's dresser, and sings to the bird in the glass. He also will sit on your finger.

I am your loving reader,

MABEL K—.

OUASI, FLA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I live in the State of Florida, Orange County. The county's name was once very appropriate; but since the freeze of 1895 we have had very few oranges. We have just been up in North Carolina. We got a lot of curious stones, and many Indian arrow and spear-heads. We also found two tomahawks.

I celebrated my eleventh birthday on the top of a high hill called Goldview. I could see about thirty miles. The highest mountain I saw was Bald, which is next to Mount Mitchell in height. I think your story about "Floating Fire-engines" is very interesting. I never saw a fire-boat, but I have seen the land engines. I always admired the horses—they are so large and strong and swift. I liked that little note about the check-rein. I have read "Black Beauty"; and I think that checking should be stopped. We have two horses, but they do not wear them. I think horses are very intelligent animals, and sometimes are wiser than their masters. When we were in California we had a gentle black horse, called "Neddie." He always stopped short whenever any of his harness came loose. We did not know this when we first got him. So one day when papa was driving him he stopped, for the trace had come down. Papa saw no cause for him to stop, so he said, "Go on"; but Neddie stood still. So papa, who had not yet seen the trace, said, "Get up!" again. This time he did go on, and by chance stepped on the dragging trace, and a piece snapped off. So after that papa knew that Ned had his reasons for stopping; and when he did stop papa always looked to see what was unfastened.

I remain your devoted reader and admirer,

PLEASANCE BAKER.

KITTERY POINT, MAINE.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I read in your September number the article about bubbles. I at once began to

blow soap-bubbles, and succeeded in finding a way to make a bubble inside a bubble. I took a mug and put a little soapsuds and water in it; then I blew a bubble which filled the mug and came a little above it. I then took my pipe and got it ready to make another bubble, but put the bowl of the pipe into the other bubble before I blew; then I blew, and made a bubble inside a bubble. Wet the inside of the mug first of all. A little practice and you can do it.

Your friend, NOEL BLEECKER VAN WAGENEN.

DURRAN HILL HOUSE, CARLISLE, ENGLAND.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am writing to tell you about a bicycle gymkhana* that my sisters went to a few days ago. There were all sorts of races and competitions; and there was music going on, which made it bright and jolly. One of the things they did, and for which my sister won the third prize, was this: There were flower-pots placed in a row about two feet apart, down one side of the lawn, and people had to ride in and out between the pots without knocking them over. In the same race, as they rode back, they had to ride between tennis-balls, which were placed in twos in a line down the other side of the lawn. The space between the two balls was just sufficient for the bicycle wheel to pass through easily. They also had a very funny race—at least, it was funny when we tried to do it afterward at home; but there they did it properly. They rode to a post some way off where there were tennis-balls on the ground. Only two people rode this race at a time. Then they dismounted, and each had to pick up a tennis-ball in a sauce- spoon—the sauce-spoons were oval-shaped, so it was very difficult to get the ball in and keep it there while they remounted and then rode home as fast as they could, without dropping the ball. If any one did drop it he had to get off his bicycle, and pick it up again with the spoon. My sister won the first prize for that race. All the prizes given were books.

I like your magazine so much, and think that "Master Skylark" is the prettiest story I have read for a long time. Your "Letter-box" is also very interesting. It is great fun to read the letters of children from all over the world.

My youngest brother, who is nearly nine years old, is very fond of playing at being a "Red Indian." He is the chief of a tribe, and calls himself "Eagle-Feather." Some of the other brothers belong to the tribe; but other tribes and enemies he has to pretend.

We all went to a fancy-dress ball near here last month. It was great fun; and there were lots of pretty dresses. My two sisters and a friend, who was staying with us, and myself went as the Four Seasons. My eldest brother went as a Spanish peasant. There were two men there dressed as savages. I think they were South Africans. They were blacked, and wore skins of animals. I wonder any one danced with them!

With every good wish for your prosperity, believe me,

Your interested reader,

ELEANOR ELIZABETH M. BUTLER.

CHÂTEAU BEAUCAILLOU,

PAR ST. JULIEN, MÉDOC, GIRONDE.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a French girl, thirteen years old, and live with my parents at our old home near Bordeaux, in the vine district of France. Our house is situated close to the river on which the commercial ships go up and down. Every year in the month of Septem-

ber the vintage takes place; and it is a pretty sight to watch the women and girls in their gaily colored sun-bonnets and aprons gathering in the grapes, and emptying their load into two big barrels, which are dragged by two patient-looking oxen.

I have just come home from a tour in Switzerland with my father and mother. We went to St. Moritz, in the Engadine. It is a lovely spot surrounded with snowy peaks and mountains, and several beautiful lakes. It is one of the prettiest places in the country, very high up (1850 meters); but unluckily the climate is not very pleasant, as there is a good deal of wind.

I have been receiving your magazine for two or three years, and find it very interesting.

I remain your interested reader,

KATHLEEN JOHNSTON.

STAUNTON HILL, CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We are two cousins, and have taken your splendid magazine for a long time. We live on a Virginia plantation, not very far from the homes of Patrick Henry and John Randolph. We went up to Red Hill, which is the name of Patrick Henry's place, last summer. It is a wooden house with a porch in front, and surrounded by box bushes. Patrick Henry's grave is a little way off from the house at the back of the flower-garden. It has a heavy stone over it, and the ground about it is covered with periwinkle. We broke a twig from the side of his grave, and keep it among our treasures.

We have two horses. Their names are "Prince" and "Judy"; and have also a little pug dog, named "Pagan," who was lost the other day, and it was a long time before he was found; and when he was discovered he was lying down in front of our neighbor's door, fast asleep, evidently enjoying himself.

We look forward to the 25th of each month with a great deal of pleasure, as we love to read the stories.

Long life to you, dear ST. NICHOLAS!

We are your interested readers,

S. EVELYN BAYLOR,

KATHLEEN EVELETH BRUCE.

NOVA FRIBURGO,

ESTADO DO RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I see you have letters from every clime, so I thought I would send one from Brazil.

Nova Friburgo is about 2700 feet above the sea level, and is surrounded by mountains and hills.

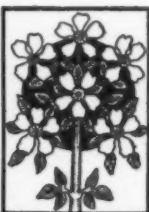
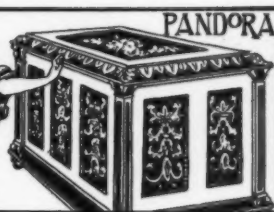
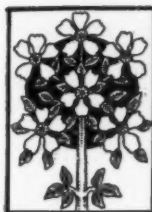
I was born in Brazil; but I claim to be an American because my name is registered in the American Consulate. We celebrated July 4th, and invited our school-mates. We put up fireworks, and had speeches.

I like the "Last Three Soldiers" best.

I am your interested reader, TAYLOR BAGBY.

We thank the young friends whose names follow for pleasant letters received: Fred W., Isabel A. Guilbert, A. G. and A. B., Howard M. Robertson, Rhea Garfield Clemens, Mary Louise Logan, Victoria Carlton, Evelyn Rosamond Hanbury, William Kernan Dart, Josephine Taber Johnson, Katharine Morton Sawin, Virginie and Jeanne Beaulieu, Alma Cutter, Kate Bogle, Luther Davis, Dorothy M., and H. B. G.

* *Gymkhana* is a word of recent origin, probably invented in Bombay, India, by English residents. *Khana* means "house," and *gymd* means "ball," and the Hindus called the racket-court a *gendkhana*. Possibly the change of *gend* to *gym* is due to the word *gymnasium*, for *gymkhana* in India was applied to a building or grounds used for athletic sports, and then to meetings or contests held at such places. For a fuller account of the word we refer inquirers to Yule and Burnell's "Anglo-Indian Glossary."



OUR RIDDLE BOX

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER.

RIDDLE. Dele-gate.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND. 1. N. 2. Sea. 3. Sharp. 4. Neander. 5. Ardor. 6. Per. 7. R. II. 1. B. 2. Leo. 3. Leech. 4. Beecher. 5. Ocher. 6. Her. 7. R. III. 1. E. 2. Arc. 3. Aisle. 4. Eschine. 5. Clipse. 6. Eas. 7. E. IV. 1. N. 2. Lee. 3. Laura. 4. Neumann. 5. Erand. 6. And. 7. N. V. 1. N. 2. Pea. 3. Pewee. 4. Newcome. 5. Aeons. 6. Ems. 7. E.

RIDDLE. Mass, Conn., Del., Ga., Ind., R. I., Md., O., La., Kan., Me., Ill., Ida., Pa., Tenn., Wis., Miss.

ILLUSTRATED DIAGONAL. Henry (Patrick). 1. Horse. 2. Heart. 3. Banjo. 4. Stork. 5. Holly.

RIDDLE. Surf, surf.

OBLIQUE RECTANGLE. 1. S. 2. Red. 3. River. 4. Severed. 5. Derived. 6. Reversal. 7. Desired. 8. Dared. 9. Led. 10. D.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers, to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS "Riddle Box," care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received, before September 15th, from Paul Reese—"Jersey Quartette"; Josephine Sherwood—"Class No. 12"; "Buffalo Quartette"; "Naum-ke-ag Tribe"; "Allil and Adi"; Mabel M. Johns—"C. D. Lauer and Co.—"Four Weeks in Kane"; Grace Edith Thallon—"Nessie and Freddie"; "Tod and Yam"; "Sigourney Fay Nininger."

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received, before September 15th, from Mai E. Lehman, 1—Waldron M. Ward, 1—No name, Tuxedo, 4—Betty K. Reilly, 6—Tom and Alfred Morewood, 11—W. L., 11—Wm. K. Dart, 3—"Bessie Thayer & Co.", 11—Abbott Augustine Thayer, 9—"S.", 5—Marian J. Homans, 4—Thomas E. Robins, 3—Marguerite Buckley, 2—G. P. T. and R. G. P., 3—Starr Hanford Lloyd, 2—"Two Little Brothers," 11—Marguerite Sturdy, 8—Hazel M. Farr, 3—"Shinnecock by the Sea," 11—Marjorie R. and Uncle Ted, 6—Clara A. Anthony, 9—Mai Elmdorf Hackstaff, 8—"Shelter Islander,"—Fred Kelsey, 4—"Riverside Quartette," 6—M. E. C. et al., 9—Estelle Feldstein, 8—Uncle Will, E. Everett and Fannie, 5—Daniel Hardin and Co., 5—Kathleen Johnston, 1.

MISSING WORDS.

WHEN the missing words in the following rhyme have been rightly supplied, the initials of the nine words will spell a common word.

What though the earth be cold and ———
And snow lies thick on field and ———
Smooth frozen are the lake and ———
And we can think of nothing ———
Whatever comes, we're happy ———
With cheer and laugh our voices ———
Down on the river by the ———
We'll skate and skate, though all ———
And shout a merry greeting ———

L. E. J.

HIDDEN GENERALS.

1. ON a pole on the barn the old flag is in sight.
2. How grandly on the breeze it is swelling to-night!
3. This is her mansion, four stories high.
4. Give her a glance as you're passing by.
5. Where is the usher? I dangle here too long.
6. Stay, lorn beggar, friends you are among.
7. Without a dog or donkey where would you be?
8. The dog ran to his master, under the tree.
9. How well that fire burns! I declare 't is fine.
10. 'T is better than Cockney can do in that line.

E. R. BURNS.

PROS AND CONS.

(EXAMPLE: For, deep; against, to confuse. Answer, pro-found, con-found.)

1. For, an advance; against, a formal assembly.

PROGRESSIVE ENIGMAS. 1. Lesson. 2. Primate. 3. Forward. 4. Rafter. 5. Usage. 6. Satin. 7. Feather. 8. Cabin. 9. Whether. 10. Soon.

A BICYCLE PUZZLE. From 43 to 43, raise; 31 to 43, house; 32 to 43, ozone; 33 to 43, drone; 34 to 43, olive; 35 to 43, drove; 36 to 43, crase; 37 to 43, niche; 38 to 43, dunce; 39 to 43, range; 40 to 43, orate; 41 to 43, noise; 42 to 41, rhododendron; 12 to 22, brass; 13 to 22, elves; 14 to 22, lanes; 15 to 22, ovals; 16 to 22, odors; 17 to 22, chess; 18 to 22, homes; 19 to 22, ideas; 20 to 22, sages; 21 to 22, traps; 20 to 22, ashes; 11 to 22, names; 12 to 11, Beloochistan; 23 to 28, memorial; 5 to 30, shipwreck; 25 to 5, immolates; 27 to 43, blockhouse; 23 to 22, messages; 1 to 3, aft; 6 to 8, red; 2 to 7, forsake; 24 to 26, spine; 29 to 27, crab; 9 to 4, healer; 5 to 22, slashes.

2. For, that which is yielded; against, to promote.
3. For, to prolong; against, to make smaller.
4. For, cause of resentment; against, convention.
5. For, an old word meaning progression; against, a sweetmeat.
6. For, to shoot forward; against, an old word meaning to throw.
7. For, result; against, behavior.
8. For, to avow openly; against, to acknowledge.
9. For, to vow; against, to vie.
10. For, liberal to excess; against, to perplex.

THEODORE LEON REDFORD.

CHARADE.

MEN roasted my first
Whenever they could.
Well served they should be,
They are always so good.

The best point of time
To appear, is my next,
Yet if 't were in China,
I think you'd be vexed.

My third is nothing —
I must confess it.
Alas, for my last!
You'll surely guess it.

My whole is witty
And wise and queer;
We greet it gladly,
And hold it dear.

CHARLOTTE OSGOOD CARTER.

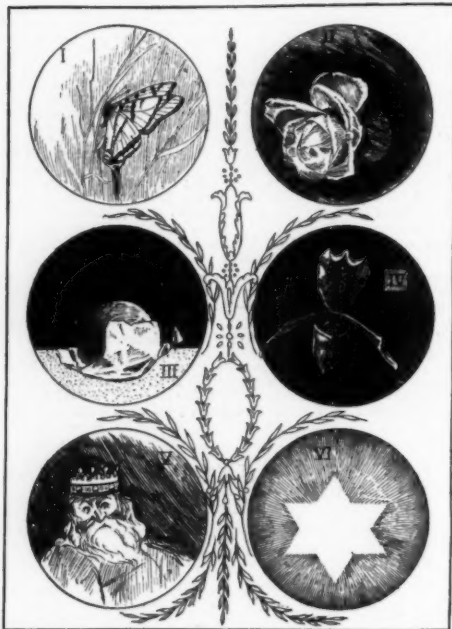
CENTRAL ACROSTIC.

ALL the words described contain the same number of letters. When these are rightly guessed and placed one below another, in the order here given, the central letters, reading downward, will spell the surname of a famous American.

CROSSWORDS: 1. Unhackneyed. 2. To command. 3. A bird similar to the swallow. 4. The goddess of the hearth. 5. A South American mammal. 6. A measure of weight.

HERBERT J. SIDONS.

ILLUSTRATED PRIMAL ACROSTIC.



EACH of the six small pictures may be described by a single word. When these words have been rightly guessed, and placed one below another, in the order in which they are numbered, the initial letters will spell the name of a famous American who was greatly beloved.

RIDDLE.

A LETTER and a morsel,
Or a tail and joiner's tool,
Will make an ancient measure
That is seldom taught at school.

A. M. P.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I AM composed of sixty-nine letters, and form a quotation from Shakspeare.

My 54-19-1-31 is the den of a wild animal. My 48-61-32-21 are parts of the body. My 2-41-63-34 is a wise woman of Norse mythology. My 17-58-37-67-6-51-23-45 is one of Shakspeare's heroines. My 42-62-9-27 is a mythical being. My 13 is a very important letter to everyone. My 52-24-50 is everything. My 11-53-68-14 is an Egyptian goddess. My 3-22-64-

46-7 is an article of dress. My 57-10-18-33-4 is an exclamation of contempt. My 43-39-25-5-65 was a famous woman of ancient times. My 35-69-8-56-47-44-20 is the Greek goddess of nature. My 15-49-12-59-38-40-26-29-55 is the element of all religions. My 60-16-28 is an embrace. My 66-30-36 is to silence forcibly.

M.

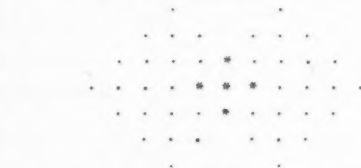
WORD-SQUARES.

I. 1. To halt. 2. A small light. 3. A fruit. 4. A feminine name. 5. A vision.

II. 1. A quadruped. 2. A Western city. 3. An instrument for cutting. 4. Inadequate. 5. A planet.

I. C. N.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.



I. 1. IN Hawthorne. 2. Conducted. 3. Performance. 4. A brilliant American statesman. 5. Loved overmuch. 6. A color. 7. IN Hawthorne.

II. 1. IN Hawthorne. 2. The initial letters of a famous British association. 3. A German composer. 4. A brilliant British statesman. 5. A descendant. 6. A feminine name. 7. IN Hawthorne. M. B. C.

CONCEALED DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

IN the primals and finals of cross-words concealed,
Find a season, and fit decoration, revealed.

CROSS-WORDS.

- "I AM going to the circus to-morrow," he said,
"And that is the reason I stand on my head."
- "You may balance," she answered, "the map on your thumbs,
And hunt for Cathay till the elephant comes."
- "There's a fellow that rassles," he joyfully cried;
"You had better say wrestles," she sweetly replied.
- "There'll be lions and tigers," he said, "on the ground,
And no end of side-shows in tents all around."
- "Will you please sign a letter I've written to say
That you'll cheerfully grant us one more holiday?"
- "When the ferret can fly, and the sword-fish can speak,
Then certainly school will be closed for a week."
- "But go to the circus," she said with a smile,
"And I'll mark etymology papers a while."
- "If you see a plaid parrot, you'll say, I suspect,
He's a poll or a polly, which is n't correct."
- "Do no pushing, nor rushing, nor crushing, lest harm
Might come to your neighbors and cause an alarm."

ANNA M. PRATT.



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MADONNA AND CHILD.

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